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UNKNOWN NORFOLK

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

A CRUISE ACROSS EUROPE

ADVENTURES WITH A SKETCH BOOK

THE LAST CRUSADE, 1914—1918

A DWELLER IN MESOPOTAMIA

A PAINTER IN PALESTINE

UNKNOWN KENT

UNKNOWN SUSSEX

UNKNOWN SURREY

UNKNOWN ESSEX

HISTORY WITH A SKETCH BOOK

UNKNOWN SUFFOLK [IN PREPARATION]

THE BODLEY HEAD

IN THE MOUNTAINS OF NORFOLK

UNKNOWN NORFOLK

BY DONALD MAXWELL

Being a series of unmethodical Explorations of the County illustrated in line and colour by the Author

LONDON: JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LIMITED

First Published in 1925

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY JARROLD AND SONS, LTD., NORWICH

PREFACE

BEYOND such occasional glimpses of the county as I could obtain in the short time that I was stationed at Great Yarmouth during the war, Norfolk was quite "unknown" to me. I started out, therefore, to explore in my good ship *Penguin*, with all the anticipation of Columbus on his way to America. Nay, with more anticipation, for I was mathematically sure of a land to be discovered.

I write, therefore, of Norfolk as a stranger in a strange land, but, none the less, I hope many a reader, born and bred in this wonderful piece of old England, will find that I have discovered something of the unknown for him as well as for myself. A place or a county may be very well known to its own people, and yet aspects of it, quite unfamiliar to them, discovered by a new-comer.

When I set out there was only one commodity known to me as belonging exclusively to Norfolk and to Norfolk only, and that was a much-anticipated supply of dumplings. Yet it was a great disappointment to find that never once was one set before me, and, after much inquiry, I was told that the changes in the household habits of the people had made them rare. A real Norfolk dumpling—not the debased

imitation made with suet—depended for its existence upon home-made bread, now rare, and was made from the dough before baking.

I am greatly indebted to the Editors of *The Graphic* and *The Yachting Monthly* respectively for kind permission to use sketches that have been reproduced in some form or other in their journals, to numerous residents of Norfolk for helping me in various ways on my travels, and to Sir Bartle Frere in agreeing not to prosecute me for libel and thus allowing me full scope in my authentic and unexpurgated account of the Battle of South Walsham Broad.

DONALD MAXWELL

BORSTAL
ROCHESTER
September 10, 1925

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I

THE WAY TO NORWICH

The Man in the Moon
Came down too soon
And asked his way to Norwich.
He went by the south
And burnt his mouth
By eating cold plum porridge.

THE GATES OF NORFOLK

THE WAY TO NORWICH

THE voyages of the *Penguin* up and down the Norfolk Coast do not concern this narrative, for the experience of weathering gales and sheltering behind banks and doing all those strenuous things that it is necessary to do in cruising off the East Coast, are very much the same wherever you shall sail. That this blue strip of land is Essex in one place, Suffolk in another, and Norfolk in another, may be very interesting at the time, but does not make for exciting topographical pictures. Such parts of this cruising, when close to the land, happened to be upon the coast of Suffolk, and so

NEW CUT AND THE WAVENEY

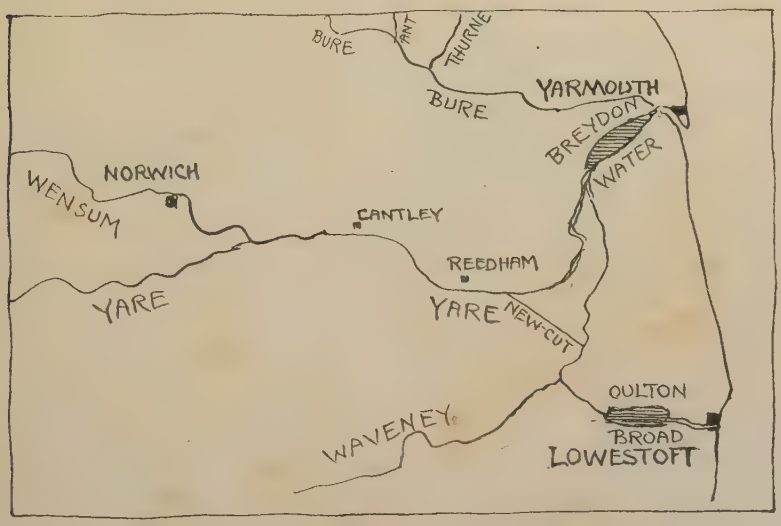
beyond giving one sketch of the wild and breezy East Anglian seas with a sailing barge making her way up the coast, we will begin *in medias res*, when the *Penguin* has left Oulton Broad, negotiated Oulton Dyke, and come near to the very gate of Norfolk—the useful but unbeautiful lifting bridge at St. Olaves, the entrance to the Haddiscoe Cut. The boundary between Norfolk and Suffolk at this part is the River Waveney, and the Haddiscoe Cut leads out of this, then entering Norfolk.

For a time the Waveney runs nearly parallel to the Cut,

REEDHAM

SQUALLY WEATHER

and the effect is very curious. In the small line sketch at the head of this chapter you can see the effect. The distant trees are upon the ridge known as the Herringfleet Hills, and the black sail of the wherry visible over the dyke is in the Waveney and separated from the Cut by a very short distance of field.



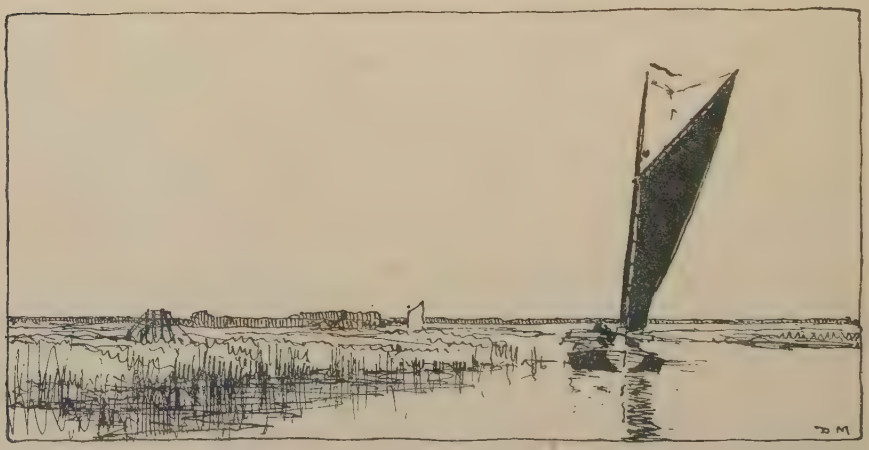
LOWESTOFT TO NORWICH

This Haddiscoe Cut, or New Cut, is a great saving of time and energy if you are bound for Norwich, for otherwise it is necessary to sail down to the southern end of Breydon Water, where the Yare joins that Broad, and get up the Yare by the next tide.

To vessels like the *Penguin*, however, with no auxiliary

power, the mischance of finding a head wind is indeed disconcerting. The waterway is too narrow for beating up, and towing is the only alternative. Even this is not so easy as it would sound, because at certain points, at the Yare end of the Cut, there are reeds across which it is difficult to keep a rope taut. A little sagging and the rope is in the reeds and pulling the boat towards the bank.

We had seemed to find very little luck with the weather. From Oulton Broad into the Waveney we had been compelled to tow by means of rowing with our dinghy ahead. It was hard work and there is very little tide to help. Once in a blue moon we got a following breeze, but not for long. The inevitable turn came and our labours had to be renewed.



"A WHERRY CAN SLIP ROUND A CORNER VERY NEAR THE WIND"

"ONCE IN A BLUE MOON WE GOT A FOLLOWING BREEZE"

A wherry can slip round a corner very "near the wind," but the *Penguin* was always inclined to get into difficulties through her lee-boards catching in the reeds.

Reedham seemed a very long way off—it is actually two and a half miles from the Waveney to the Yare—but at last we reached the river which would take us on our way to Norwich.

We had waited some time for the opening of the bridge on the Waveney. This is under reconstruction and will probably be ready for traffic by the time this book is out. The chance, however, of being there, and the difficulties

connected with getting through, caused a landing party to go up to the station at Haddiscoe, and there we witnessed a feature of railway routine which will soon be a thing of the past.

Dating from the time of George Stephenson, there have been certain safeguards and customs with regard to trains passing over bridges. In this place there is still a *bridge-pilot* who boards the engine (see page 13) and leaves again when he is at an appointed place on the other side. "Dropping the pilot" is a regular feature to be witnessed by travellers by train as easily as by passengers upon a ship. When the pilot alights upon a little patch of gravel made especially for the purpose, the train is generally travelling at considerable speed. I am told that with the completion of the new bridge this picturesque feature of East Anglian travel will disappear.

The way to Norwich, as far as the river route was concerned, seemed to be plain sailing. Cantley has been altered almost out of recognition by the huge sugar beet factory, but of that and its significance in the industrial world I have given some account in the next chapter.

The largest of the Broads accessible by the Yare is Rockland, and it is one of the wildest. It is beloved of anglers and naturalists. We did not spend much time here, however, for we wanted to get to Norwich as a centre of exploration. Soon we left the Yare and entered the Wensum. There is a strange familiarity to me, as we approach the city, although I have never been in this part of Norfolk

ON THE WAVENEY

before—except in passing through by train. The same familiarity was noticeable on exploring the Stour for the first time. In that case it was the pictures of Constable; in this case those of the Norwich school. Cromes, Cotmans, Cattermoles—they crowd upon the traveller.

Another bridge and

PICKING UP THE TRAIN PILOT FOR CROSSING THE BRIDGE

ST. OLAVES: DROPPING THE PILOT

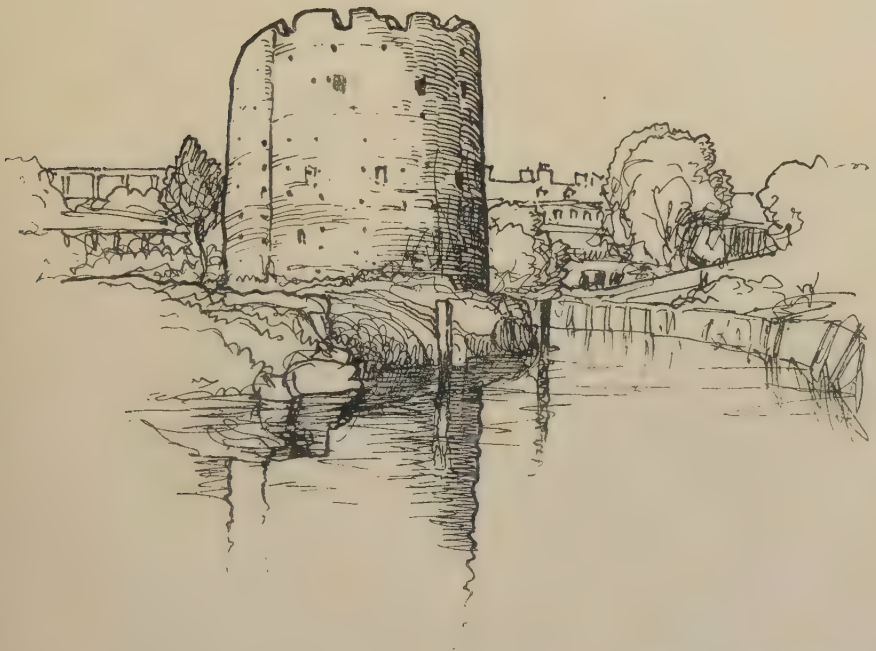
we are in the City of Norwich, a vista of red roofs and trees and the great steeple—the whole not unlike a scene in Bruges or Amsterdam. Progress is slow, with our tackle down, but we pass the

bridge by the station and later negotiate the mediæval arches (which I have sketched in another setting on page 147), and finally moored by an old brick tower (page 15) and settled down for the night.

THE APPROACH TO NORWICH

Norwich is the centre of the road system of Norfolk. Roads radiate from it as the spokes of a wheel from the hub. By looking at the names upon the map it would seem that

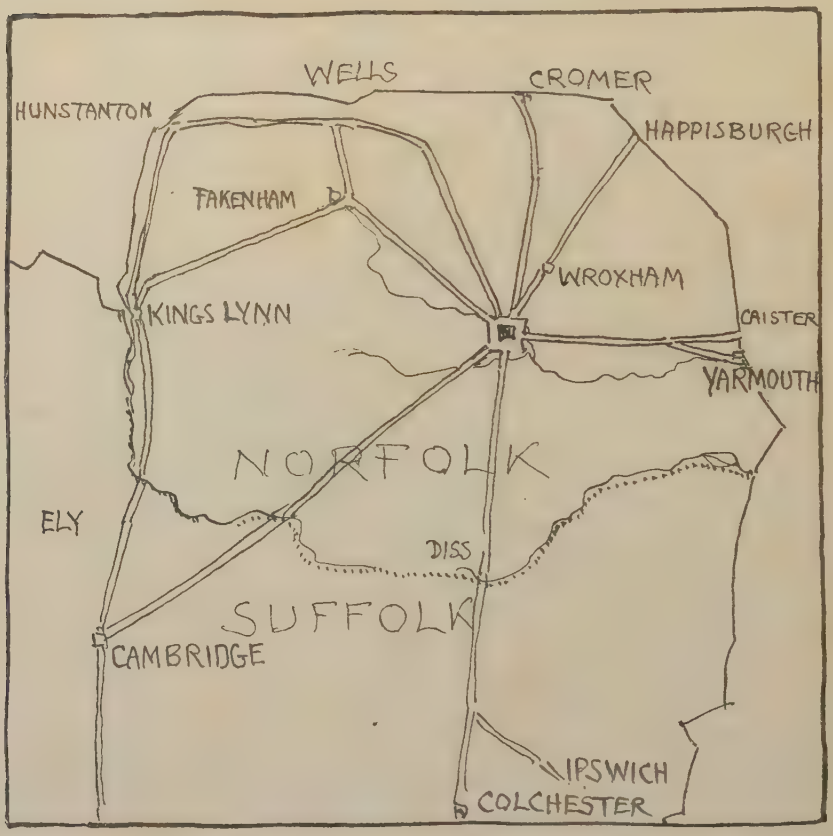
the road from Ipswich was an old one. The names going north—Brome Street, Long Stratton (Street Town), and Caistor St. Edmunds (Castra)—suggest a Roman road.



A TOWER ON THE WENSUM

I wonder if this road to Norwich from the south was the principal approach to the city in the days of the composition of our nursery rhymes. The old doggerel about the Man in

the Moon asking his way to Norwich informs us that he went "by the south." It may be that the exigencies of rhyme

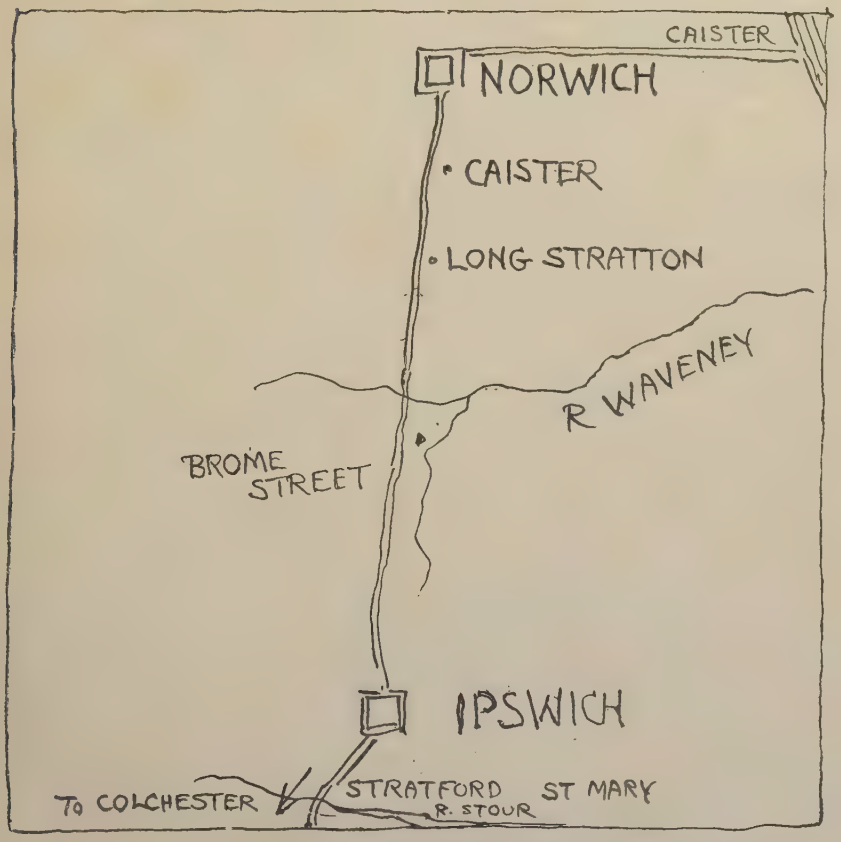


THE ROADS OUT OF NORWICH

made it *south* to rhyme with *mouth*, but it is more likely to be the other way round and the "burnt his mouth" is put in to respond to "went by the south." Perhaps the statement

ON THE WENSUM, NORWICH

that he went by the south (i.e. the road from the south) was a natural inference to anyone who knew Norfolk, because it is the old road.



ROMAN NAMES ON THE ROAD FROM NORWICH TO IPSWICH

Whatever there is in this rhyme, it is probable that the "cold plum porridge" has no esoteric meaning, but is

supplied as the only rhyme that the author could suggest for Norwich.

That Caistor St. Edmunds was upon a Roman road there can be no manner of doubt since the remains of the Roman walls, as at Burgh Castle, are there to this day. The camp measured 438 yards from east to west and 362 yards from north to south. In some maps this name is spelt Caister, as the place two miles north of Yarmouth, and the two localities are often confused.

II

SUGAR AND SPICE

" So work the honey bees,
Creatures that, by a rule in Nature, teach
The art of order to a peopled kingdom."

Henry V, Act 1

SUGAR AND SPICE

THANKS to this new industry, there are at least some areas in England to-day where there is no unemployment. At Cantley, in Norfolk, and on the River Yare, where the infant beet sugar factory of this country is growing into a strong and sturdy child, I hastened with my sketch-book one day in winter, and found it under somewhat arctic conditions, and received a violent surprise, for I found, unbelievable as it seems, numbers of people in yachts, wherries, and houseboats camping out on the River Yare. When the shadows of evening began to fall, there appeared orange lights

from cabin windows, smoke from galley chimneys, and once more was heard the merry hum of the Primus stove as if a sultry day in August was drawing to a close instead of a frosty and bleak twilight in January.

I know from experience that living through the winter in a small craft is not so Spartan and rigorous as most landlubbers imagine, but I was surprised that so large a number of people had discovered the fact, and that they should all come to Cantley in a body.

Inquiry soon enlightened me. The season for sugar making is during the beet harvest, which begins in October, and, in hard winters like the present one, lingers on well into January. Seven hundred men are wanted in the works of the English Beet Sugar Corporation at this time of the year for the purpose of converting the produce of the beet harvest into sugar, and the extra housing accommodation of a place like Cantley, where such a demand was quite unexpected, is almost *nil*. Many hands come from Yarmouth and Norwich and adjoining villages by means of motors, but others have availed themselves, for housing purposes, of the Broads' numerous yachts and wherries, normally laid up at this season.

There are two sugar-making factories in Great Britain—one at Newark, in Nottinghamshire, and the other at Cantley. In the country around both these places and for some distance from them can be seen fields of what appear to be turnips or swedes. I should have said "could have been seen," for the last root is now lifted and being made into sugar, and not

BY THE SUGAR WORKS, CANTLEY

till the spring will the new crop be sown. A close inspection reveals, however, that these "turnips" are white beets, or sugar beets, not unlike a parsnip, and varying in shape more than the ordinary red beet.

I will not go into the technicalities of making beet sugar, but, roughly speaking, it proceeds as follows: The roots are brought to the factory by water, by road or rail, as occasion serves. Either washed out of the trucks by a powerful hose, or tipped into a trench of running water, they are carried, a river of beetroot, into the factory.

There is no waste. Every bit of the beets is used. The tops are good fodder, the "pulp," left after the sugar is extracted, still retaining a certain amount of sugar, makes a valuable cattle food. This pulp, dried into a substance resembling broken slate, about the fineness of a coarse chaff, is stored in a curious building with "tumble home" sides, the angle of which is determined by the angle of the heaped substance; this avoids pressure on the sides of the building. The effect, from an architectural point of view, is curious, but inasmuch as it expresses a constructional necessity, it is pleasing to the eye.

The success of this home-grown sugar experiment is particularly happy with regard to employment. When the farmers are getting slack after the harvest, the factory can absorb labour and give brisk work to 700 men for three or four months. Even in the off season, some 150 to 200 men are employed in overhauling the machinery and doing such work as is necessary before the next autumn.

There is no duty on British-made sugar, and the attraction is obvious ; nearly 9,000 tons were produced last year. This represents a supply for this country for three and a half days out of the year. After allowing for some 17 per cent. of our sugar supplies coming from our own colonies, we come to the remarkable conclusion that about eighty times the present output of home-grown sugar would obviate the necessity of importing any sugar at all.

The country around Cantley is very reminiscent of Holland. As on the other side of the North Sea, so here you find flat expanses of cultivated land divided by ditches, long lines of trees, grown with a slant that shows the direction of the prevailing gales, windmills and spacious skies. The wherries too, with their long pennants give another note of the Netherlands. Indeed, in many respects, the likeness between the two countries is really wonderful. The language which is spoken is, one might say, about the only difference.

The serious shortage of the sugar supply during the war opened the eyes of our agriculturists and manufacturers to the possibilities of building up an industry of home-grown and home-manufactured sugar. Austria, Germany, Holland, France, and other countries exported large quantities of beet sugar to these islands. Encouraged by Government bounties, it was possible for them to " nurse " a growing industry with great success. It need not be doubted that the exportation under these conditions was found very remunerative. Why should these countries have (apart from cane sugar) a monopoly in providing us with sugar ? Why should not an attempt

A RIVER OF BEETROOT

be made to grow our own beet and make our own sugar? There is this, further, to be said for it: from the point of view of the farmer, sugar beet is a good proposition. It is a "cleaning" crop that can be grown in rotation with others, and it does not impoverish the land. There is literally no waste, for in the process of manufacture all the by-products are used. The works at Cantley were built before the war, but great difficulties were experienced in the first years of its existence, and it is only for about a year now that it has been a paying proposition. The experience gained at Cantley was useful in organizing the more recently built works (1920) at Newark.

Now both are flourishing concerns, and it looks as if the infant sugar industry of this country, already grown up to be a fine child, will develop into a giant.

Now that both these centres are well established, I hear that there are others in the making—one near Peterborough being in the course of erection, and before this is published it will probably be dealing with the beet crops for the winter.

There was a time when a good deal of the Fen was considered unproductive. Great progress has been made of recent years, however, by agriculturists, and some of the Fen is as thick with orchards as Kent. The beet crop, one growing in popularity with farmers, is considerably larger every year. If the output of sugar could be increased by seventy times, we should need to import no sugar from overseas.

In conversation with various people interested in this new British industry I gather that one of the chief difficulties to be faced is the "uncertainty of tenure" in regard to taxation. At first the industry being relatively a small one the Inland Revenue did not impose any tax upon home-grown sugar. What policy will be adopted when it grows into a big business remains to be seen. There is no opposition to the idea of a duty on home-grown sugar. A light one, I am told, could well be borne. But if the amount of this could be fixed for a given period of years so that it was not liable to fluctuate with successive Budgets, the growers and manufacturers could know exactly where they were and what margin of profit was equitable.

III

THE VENICE OF EAST ANGLIA

"You may be sure of this much—that for seven hundred years Venice had more likeness in her to old Yarmouth than to new Pall Mall: and that you might come to a shrewder guess of what she and her people were like by living for a year or two lovingly among the herring catchers of Yarmouth Roads . . . than by any lengthy or eloquent history."

RUSKIN

FROM THE YACHT STATION, GREAT YARMOUTH

THE VENICE OF EAST ANGLIA

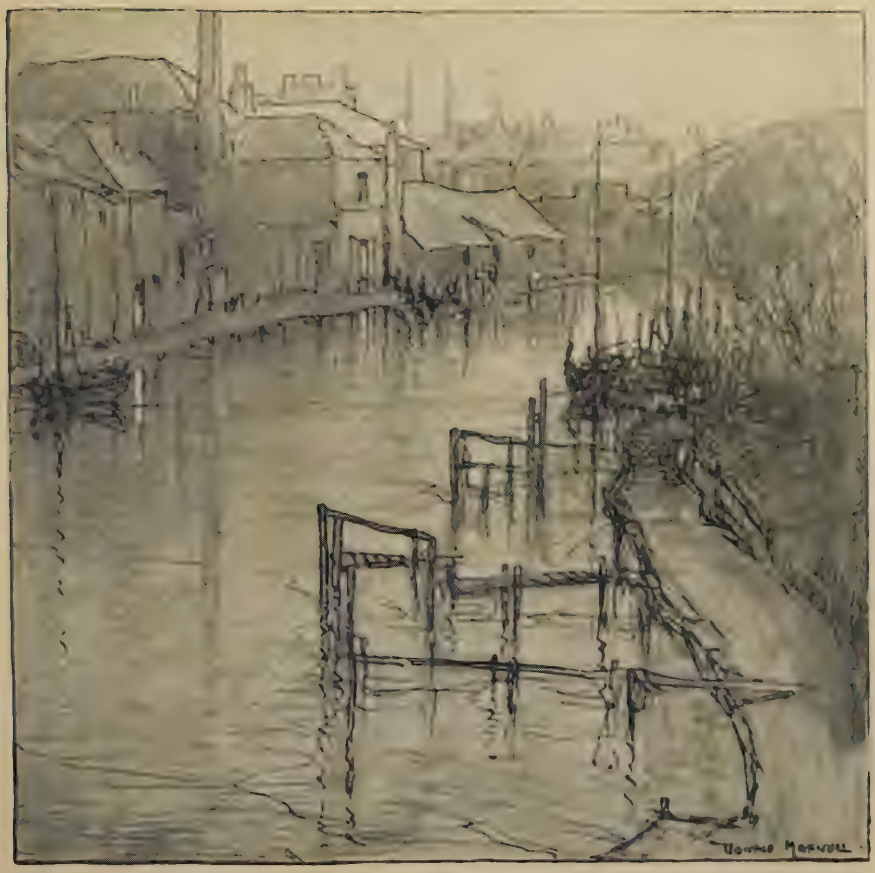
GREAT YARMOUTH is full of pleasure craft bound for various cruising haunts upon the Broads and rivers. From the yachting station on the Bure there is an interesting view as we look down river. A venerable tower makes the principal feature, a tower which my pilot pronounces unhesitatingly as part of Roman Yarmouth, in spite of the fact that it bears a notice to the effect that it was built in the reign of Henry III. As a matter of fact, there could not be any trace of Yarmouth in Roman times except in the form of seashells, as Yarmouth did not exist. The two

fortresses of Caister to the north and Burgh Castle to the south guarded an inland sea which overran what are now the Broads and made Norwich almost " on sea." The spot where Yarmouth now stands is formed of sand and shingle thrown up by the Rivers Bure, Yare, and Waveney. At first a mere bank at low water and then, in Saxon times, a barren island, it is recorded that the fishermen of the Cinque Ports coming to this part of the world for the herring fishery used this " no man's land " as a place for drying their nets and sorting their fish. The supposed priority of right to this bank by the Cinque Ports led to a centuries old quarrel between the " upstart " Yarmouth and the older federation.

I have come across a perfectly delightful description from the pen of an old chronicler concerning the establishment and growth of Great Yarmouth :

" As the sand upon which Yarmouth is built, did grow to be drye, and was not overflowen by the sea, but waxed in height and also in greatnes, much store of people from the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk did resorte thither, and did pitche tabernacles and boothes for the enterteynenge of such sea-faring men and fishermen and merchants as would resorte unto that place eyther to sell their herringes-fish or other comodoties. "

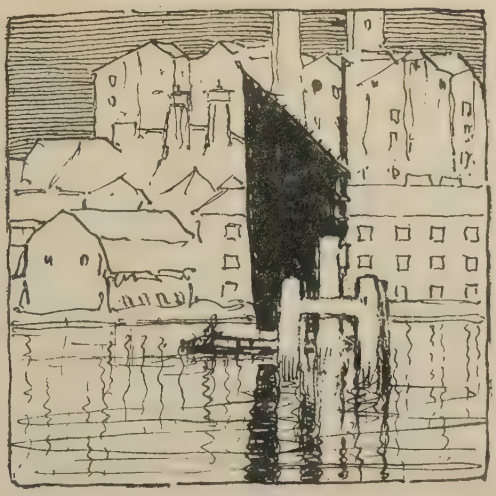
I think our spelling has degenerated sadly since these good old days. How much more interesting is a narrative by Leland than by a modern writer, because there is a certain excitement in recognizing the word by the spelling. I



REFLECTIONS, GREAT YARMOUTH

THE OLD TOWER ON THE BURE

should like to be able to spell as I felt inclined, as these early historians did. I might then write of the *Penguin's* arrival at Yarmouth in the following terms :



THE END OF BREYDON WATER

"Wen the shippe Pencuyn didde com in to the haven the burgers feered that shee was a pire rayte, but wen they founed that she was a shippe of peese, all manner of folkes didde run to the cuais and they laffed much and lowdley to see so straynge a vesel, but didde sho goodwil and did enterteyne them with herringes-fish."

There are certain parallels in the history of Venice and of Yarmouth. Both were settlements upon newly made sandbanks in the sea and people from the adjoining mainland. Both began largely as fishing towns, gradually acquiring other interests as trade developed, Venice by her contact with the marts of the East, and Yarmouth by her dealings with Holland and the Baltic. And between the two famous shrines built in the days of their prosperity, St. Mark's in Venice and the great church of Yarmouth, the largest of any church in England, there is a striking parallel. As the sun

rises over the Adriatic the first object on which its rays light is the Campanile of St. Mark's before all the churches of the mainland, and, appearing from the North Sea, its first golden shaft strikes the summit of the spire of Great Yarmouth before touching any other object in all England.

With these things in mind, I was ready to admit a certain family likeness between the two places, but was not prepared for the revelation in my first glimpse of Yarmouth from Breydon Water—for this was Venice in all her splendour, mirrored in the still lagoons and seen adown an avenue of piles both red and black—the Venice of East Anglia. Indeed, the colour of Yarmouth on a sunny day, a riot of purple and splendid red, tells more in the distance than does the colour of Venice—seen "as her captains saw her—a bar of sunset that could not fade away"; and lest you should think this comparison is fanciful, I will pursue the matter further and give you sketches besides this one impression of the approach. Here are two detailed subjects to make the parallel a closer one. Both are on the River Bure, one, a sketch taken from the bridge by Vauxhall Station, where the shrimping boats have little piers and landing stages along the west bank; the other, higher up, a sketch made from the Yachting Station. The fact that yachts often pass this point ready for getting under the bridges and with their tackle down makes for a gondola-like effect, especially at night. The old tower is part of the mediæval defences of Great Yarmouth, when that port was a walled town, and is a quaint and picturesque object from all points of view.

THE APPROACH TO VENICE IN EAST ANGLIA

Now that I have been struck with the likeness in certain things between Venice and Great Yarmouth, I call to mind a passage of Ruskin in "St. Mark's Rest," in which he holds up Yarmouth as a nearer counterpart to old Venice than splendid cities of architectural pretensions. Writing of Venice in her early days, he says:

ON BREYDON WATER

"For the whole of her first seven hundred years of work and war, Venice was in great part a wooden town. . . . You may be sure of this much—that for seven hundred years Venice had more likeness in her to old Yarmouth than to new Pall Mall: and that you might come to a shrewder guess of what she and her people were like by living for a year or two lovingly among the herring-catchers of Yarmouth Roads . . . than by reading any lengths of eloquent history."

The site of Great Yarmouth is a curious one. The Rivers Yare and Waveney join each other at the entrance to Breydon Water, a large inland tidal lake some four and a half miles long and one mile wide, through which a deep channel runs, mainly east and west, well defined by a series of great posts, those on the southern side being painted red, and those on the northern black. At the eastern end of this lake the River Bure flows into it from the north. From a point about a quarter of a mile from this end of Breydon Water flows out the Yare, taking a course parallel to the coast line of the North Sea, and separated from it by only a few hundred yards of land, and joining the sea at Gorleston between two and three miles south. On the upper end of this curious strip of country stands Great Yarmouth. The streets are few, but the rows are many. The rows are narrow alley-ways between the houses, often not more than three or four feet wide. On a sunny day, with a small strip of blue above and a glimpse of water or a ship's mast in the narrow prospect ahead, these little ways are also reminiscent of Venice, for Venice abounds in similar alley-ways between tall buildings and leading from one canal to another.

To many who served in the Navy during the war (I refer especially to the trawler and sweeping sections) Yarmouth was *pied-à-terre*. Bombarded both from the sea and from the air, it was a very lively place of sojourn. The hardy sons of Yarmouth and of all this coast were made of such stuff that they were adaptable for service in any part of the world. East Coast trawlers and drifters were to be found in the

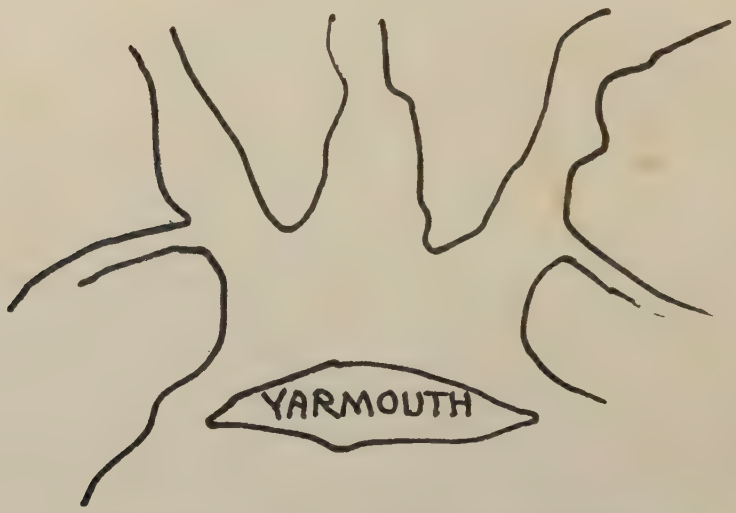
WAREHOUSES ON THE YARE

IN TOW ACROSS BREYDON WATER

harbours of Egypt, among the scattered islands of the Ægean and on the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. Even in the far-off streets of Baghdad I have been greeted in strong Norfolk dialect by men whose aptitude for negotiating the peculiar difficulties of the Tigris and the Euphrates was acquired in Breydon Water and the Broads and the shallow channels and shifting sand-bars of the East Anglian coast.

As for the sea front of Yarmouth, it is just the usual sea front of any large seaside resort, and has very little character of its own. Someone has hoped to do this Norfolk health resort a service by calling it the Blackpool of the East Coast. This seems like "writing up" Rome by comparing it with the White City of Shepherd's Bush. Do not let this frighten you, however, or keep you away from the other side of this wonderful old town—the Venice of East Anglia.

Yarmouth is a town of very rich colouring and the dominant note is red. Often there are telling harmonies in red and black. The " rows," too, are a peculiar characteristic of the place, narrow passages between the houses. They show a feature of this old town which is very quaint and



THE POSITION OF THE SANDBANK ON WHICH YARMOUTH IS BUILT, FROM AN OLD MAP

belongs to Yarmouth alone. In one of these narrow ways there exists a house, said to be the oldest building in Yarmouth, built out of the timbers of a ship. I have seen it stated that in the time of the Armada one of the wrecked Spanish galleons was thrown up on the shore at a spot that is far west of the

GREAT YARMOUTH FROM BREYDON WATER

present sea front, and that this ship has been built into this house. It seems to me rather a tall story, and it is very unlikely that a wrecked hull would lie in such a position that it could be " worked in." It is possible to imagine some Elizabethan ancestor of Mr. Daniel Peggotty might have

AT THE BACK OF THE YACHT STATION, GREAT YARMOUTH

thought of the idea of a ship-house. If so, the house has been rebuilt at a later date, and beyond the fact of ship's timbers being used in the construction I have found no other traces of a ship. Negative evidence, however, is of very little value, and perhaps some other explorer will be more successful.

A STUDY IN CHIMNEYS

In Yarmouth, apart from the likeness to Venice, there is a certain quaintness that suggests a foreign town. This is probably because in its early days there *was* a good deal of the foreign element. It was a Dutchman, Vermayden, who reclaimed a great deal of East Anglian land and made it fruitful, and it was an engineer from Holland, Jonas Johnson by name, who succeeded in making a satisfactory junction between the Yare and the sea—to wit, the present mouth at Gorleston—when very many previous attempts had ended in failure.

The settlers, too, from the Low Countries in the reign of Edward III kept up a strong foreign element, and the prosperity of Yarmouth, with its brisk trade with the Continent, no doubt made it more cosmopolitan in character than most English ports.

There is something extraordinarily attractive to me about old Yarmouth, and yet the only thing most people know about it is that it produces bloaters. It is just a hundred years ago that bloaters were invented—I believe by accidentally leaving some herrings in a smoke house—and I have not yet heard what is to take place as an historical celebration of this great addition to the resources of the breakfast table. It has been rumoured that the Freedom of Great Yarmouth is to be given to any visitor who succeeds in eating more than sixteen bloaters at a sitting.

It may seem a good joke to many that a book entitled "Unknown Norfolk" should contain a chapter on Great Yarmouth, of which even people outside Norfolk may have heard. But the term "unknown" must not be taken to mean that no

A ROW IN GREAT YARMOUTH

ordinary person will be familiar with it. The best known places have often something about them "unknown." That Yarmouth attracts a great many trippers is the one fact that may keep a certain type of "off-the-beaten-track" explorer away and thus he will not know that

BY SALHOUSE BROAD

it is like Venice. I hope, now, he will go and see whether or no I have proved my case.

It may be, too, that the reader is so modern that Dickens' inimitable word-sketches of Yarmouth are unknown, and so I will quote a vivid fragment from *David Copperfield*:

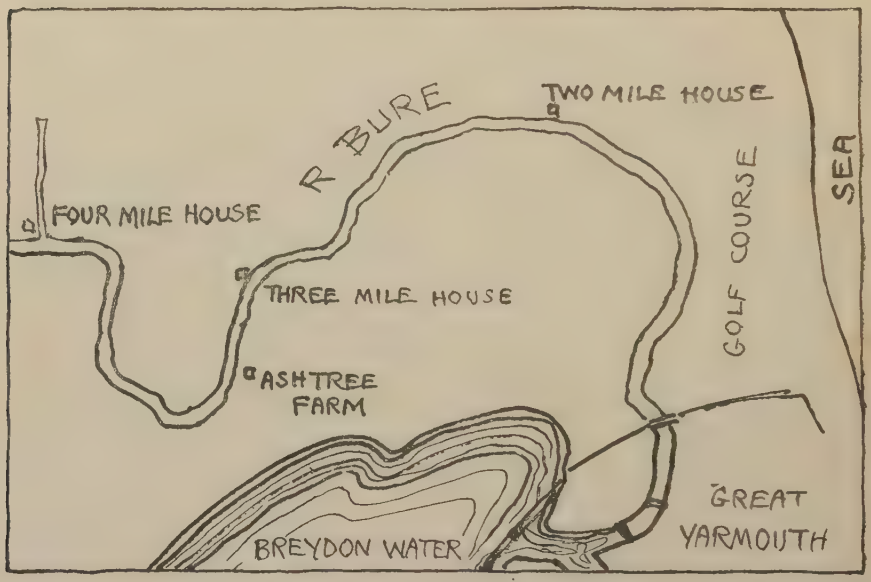
"It looks rather spongy and soppy, I thought, as I carried

my eye over the great dull waste that lay across the river, and I could not help wondering, if the world were really as round as my geography book said, how any part of it came to be so flat. But I reflected that Yarmouth might be situated at one of the poles ; which would account for it. As we drew

TWILIGHT ON THE THURNE

a little nearer, and saw the whole adjacent prospect lying in a straight low line, under the sky, I hinted to Peggotty that a mound or two might improve it ; and also that if the land had been a little more separated from the sea, and the town and the tide had not been quite so mixed up, like toast and water, it would have been nicer. . . .

"When we got into the street (which was strange enough to me), and smelt the fish, the pitch, and oakum and tar, and saw the sailors walking about, and the carts jingling up and down over the stones, I felt that I had done so busy a place an injustice; and said as much to Peggotty, who heard



THE BURE OUT OF YARMOUTH

my expression of delight with great complacency, and told me it was well known that Yarmouth was, upon the whole, the finest place in the Universe."

Quite apart from the picturesque quays along the river and the quaint glimpses of things nautical in shipbuilders'

yards, Yarmouth has a fascinating region under the care of Trinity House, a place of lightships, strange moorings and giant buoys. I do not mean by this that the buoys are bigger here than other buoys, but few people realize their size until they see them at close quarters, and then, especially

HORNING FERRY

when standing upon dry ground, they appear unusually immense and are to be compared in size with cottages rather than with barrels. The "spare" lightships, too, being painted and repaired and named with enormous names upon their sides, these seem to be sea creatures from another

world. It must be remembered that lightships can never be absent from their accustomed positions during repairs, and so duplicates have to be kept to change with them from time to time. It is rare for a lightship to be run down and sunk, but this does happen sometimes, and then Trinity House produces a duplicate as if by magic, and within a few hours a lightship is again seen in its accustomed position.

A POST IMPRESSION

IV

THE NARROWS OF NORFOLK

" ' Our broad,' as he always called the extensive pool by which his cottage stood, was his microcosm —his world ; the islands in it were his Gardens of the Hesperides—its opposite extremity his Ultima Thule. Wherever his thoughts wandered they could not get beyond the circle of his beloved lake ; indeed, I never knew them aberrant but once, when he informed me, with a doubting air, that he had sent his wife and his two eldest children to a fair at a country village two miles off, *that their ideas might expand by travel.*"

RICHARD LUBBOCK

A YACHTING NIGHTMARE

THE NARROWS OF NORFOLK

MY views upon the sense of humour on the part of the man who first called the waters of Norfolk the Broads are already known to you. I should like also to record my experience of the exquisite subtlety of practical joking on the part of owners of motor boats. It frequently happened that the *Penguin* encountered a very short and narrow reach and a head wind in what was otherwise a good run. Her size and the inevitable reeds and the fact that we could not get a line ashore sometimes made for an hour's delay. One push or one momentary pull from a motor boat would have sent us

on our way rejoicing, yet it was only on two occasions during this whole cruise that any sportsman offered to take a line in passing. Generally, motor boats stopped their engines and lay around as if they were witnessing some curious kind of extra turn at a music-hall. On our way up the River Bure, and when we were in difficulties with reeds near Stokesby, a motor boat dashed up and "stood by." The following dialogue took place :

Motor Boat : Ship ahoy ! Is this the famous *Penguin* ?

Penguin : Yes. If not famous, she is notorious.

Motor Boat : Are you Mr. Donald Maxwell, the artist ?

Penguin : Yes. I am.

Motor Boat : Are you trying to get to Acle ?

Penguin : Yes. We have a faint hope of getting there this summer.

Motor Boat (starting engine and proceeding towards Acle) : Well, good-bye !

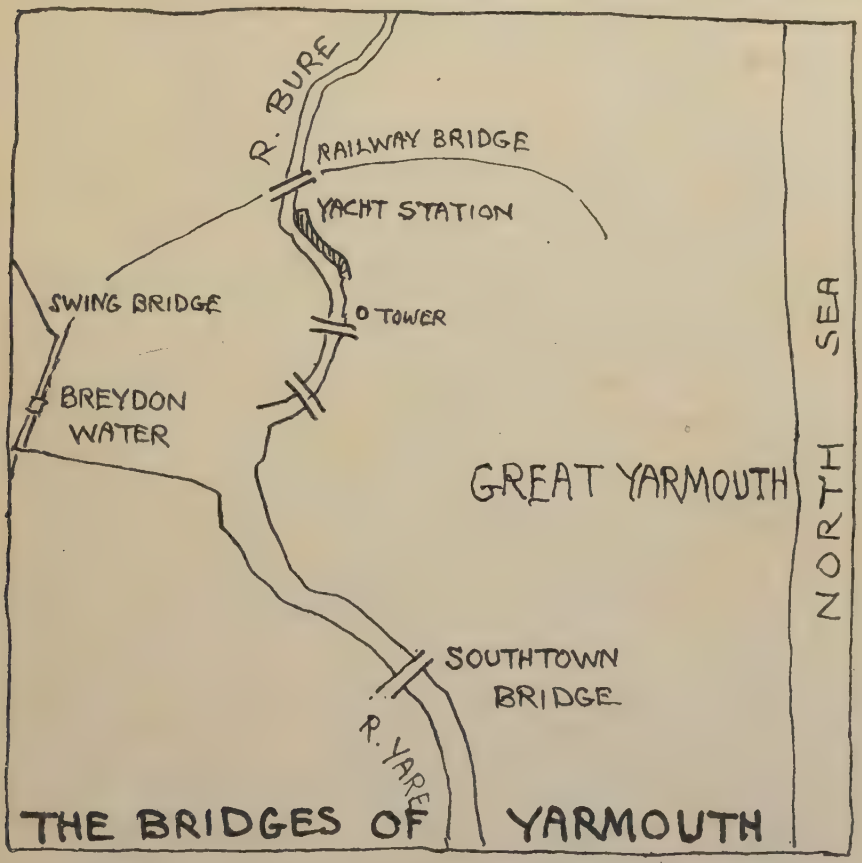
Penguin : Good-bye ! ! !

Another mystery of the Broads is the reluctance of various writers of "practical" guides to cruising thereupon to give the most necessary and vital information. We find out how many miles it is from A to B, the exact depth of the water at C, the probabilities of being able to purchase gramophone needles at D, and the methods employed for catching eels at E ; but the two things we wanted most to know were never given, i.e. the respective clearance heights of the bridges at Acle and Potter Heigham. Nobody seemed ever to have measured them. I have discussed the subject at various inns

POTTER HEIGHAM BRIDGE

PLEASURE WHERRY WITH BONNET

between Yarmouth and Acle, and indeed in the bar of the inn at Acle, and only the vaguest information was obtainable. The forecasts concerning the *Penguin's* chance of



getting through either bridge were of the gloomiest kind. Everybody was quite sorry for us, for of course, if we could not get through Acle Bridge we could not reach any Broads at all!

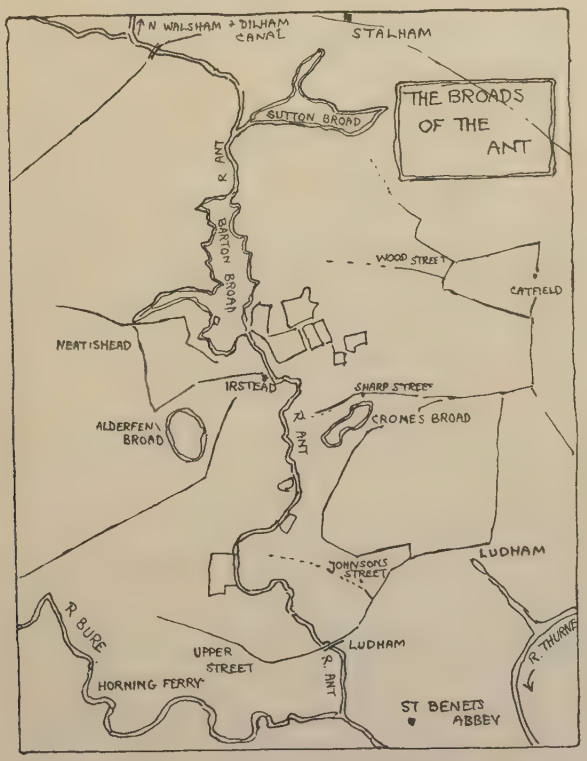
Needless to say, the *Penguin*, which is built in such a way that she looks very much bigger than she really is, went under Acle Bridge without any difficulty. But Potter Heigham was another story. The only chance of getting through there, was by dismantling her entirely, lowering her by taking in water and trying the manœuvre at low tide. I had wild ideas of giving a tea party to all the inhabitants of Potter Heigham and then, the hull being already unusually deep in the water owing to the weight of so many passengers, suggesting mixed bathing in the cabin. The scheme, however, seemed too elaborate to be worth while, so we decided to explore Hickling Broad and Horsey Mere by pushing on in the dinghy. Of this, however, more later.

The "tide" at Potter Heigham Bridge has been the subject of much legal argument. The question: "When is a tide not a tide?" might be answered: "When it is at Potter Heigham." For the law of the land has been defined, and the tide at Potter Heigham is no tide; and everybody knows now, if he didn't know it before, that the law is an ass. True, it rises and falls some eight inches, and a strong current runs up at the flood and down again at the ebb, but it is no tide. It is a crime to *call* it a tide, for we are forbidden, like Galileo was forbidden, to proclaim our theory as a fact. We can only say as Galileo said after he had signed his solemn declaration: "It moves."

Somebody had told me of a local man, who, in a famous lawsuit concerning "rights" on Hickling Broad, had taken the side of the landowners and gone in the witness-box to

TWO · WINDMILLS · BY · LUDHAM · BRIDGE

state that there was no tide at Potter Heigham. I met him one day on the bridge and knowing who he was, could not resist pulling his leg. I therefore posed as the innocent and



THE BROADS OF THE ANT

inquiring stranger. The tide was flowing rapidly through the bridge. I leaned over and pointed excitedly to the moving water, and called his attention to it. He seemed

puzzled at my surprise. "It's only the tide," he said. "The tide!" I replied. "My dear sir, don't you know that the current is caused by newts? There is *no* tide here. It can be proved by sworn evidence."

It is usual to explain the word Broads by the fact that the narrow rivers *broaden out* into small lakes. The process, however, has in reality been just the reverse. At one time these waters were inland seas. The ground has risen, and thus they have shrunk and shrunk until they are relatively a mere series of puddles left by the receding tide.

Barton Broad is a classic case of an extensive sheet of water reached by an exceedingly narrow river, the Ant. From the point of view of the *Penguin* the Ant is purgatorial when there is a head wind. "Go to the Ant, thou sluggard," would be advice to some purpose, for we had to work like slaves with one man pushing at the *Penguin's* bow on one bank and another pushing at her stern on the other.

At Ludham Bridge are two windmills. I have sketched them here in the twilight, when one looks rather like a skeleton.

I am much intrigued by a study of a map of the Broads to imagine what they could have been like in the time of the Roman occupation, when they were literally inland seas. Assuming that Hickling Broad, Horsey Mere, Heigham Sound, and Martham Broad formed one big inlet joined to the North Sea at the point that is now Horsey Gap, and assuming that the Broads at Wroxham, Ranworth, Hoveton, etc., and another group by Barton Broad were also arms

A MILL NEAR STOKESBY

of the sea, did the Romans have a road from Caister leading up towards Stalham ?

A string of names on the map is significant. There is Low Street by Rollesby, Coldharbour by Ludham. East of that is Upper Street, and then in a line going north, Johnson's Street, Sharp Street, and Wood Street. Of course, the word Street does not always indicate a Roman way. In many cases it is modern, as Blank Street, i.e. the street which runs through the village of Blank ; but when there are many and in some sort of order across a ridge of country there is generally evidence of some ancient way. Perhaps some reader who has studied this question will let me know his conclusions.

The numerous names ending in " by " lying all round the group of Broads connected with Filby points inevitably to Danish settlements on the shores of a fiord. Hemsby, Ormesby St. Michael, Filby, Thrigby, Billockby, Clippesby, Rollesby—they stand all round like illustrations in an open book of history.

The ruins of St. Benet's Abbey appear as a very curious object, seen from afar across the level land. The reason of this architectural freak—as it first appears, for it seems to belong to a style of building more to be associated with Babylonia than East Anglia—is not far to seek. On nearer approach the traveller can see the nature of the structure. A gateway and a few fragments of ecclesiastical architecture remain, but rising from the midst of it and incorporated with it is a cone-shaped tower which was once part of a windmill.

The material of this tower is both stone and brick and the opportunism of the work suggests that all the material is taken from the ruins. If this is so, then a good deal of the Abbey may have been built in brick and the earlier part (of which a gateway remains) in flint and stone. Some of this flint and stone work is very tough from a demolition point of view, and should imagine that the brickwork would be by far easier to cart away.

It can be seen that of the rebuilt Abbey, at one time the wealthiest monastic house in East Anglia, hardly anything remains, and of this nothing at all appears to disclose the form of the earlier building, attributed to Canute.

There is a very slight rise in the ground on which the Abbey stood, not more than a few feet, but just sufficient to lift it above the tides. In Canute's time it must have been almost upon the sea and must have been an island, probably connected to the mainland by a causeway.

So strongly fortified was this place that it held out a long time against William the Conqueror, and, when at last it did fall it fell through treachery. The story connected with this siege is a grim one. It appears that one of the monks of an ambitious nature conceived the idea of making himself Abbot. He went to the camp of the besiegers and bargained with them. If the victor would promise to instal him as Abbot, he would show them a path through the marsh and all would be well.

William the Conqueror prided himself on being a man who kept his promises, so when he took the place and accepted

the submission of the monks, he saw that the traitor monk was duly and solemnly installed. Here, however, his promises ended. He had not promised anything as to the length of tenure of the new Abbot. Consequently he hanged him within a few hours of his sordid triumph.

It is disappointing to find that there is no accredited

ST. BENET'S ABBEY

ghost to haunt this lonely spot. Some tale of the traitor monk, seen on certain nights dressed in most gorgeous vestments and doomed to wander to and fro in the Abbey over which he ruled would have been confidently expected. I believe a wherryman once picked up a terrified visitor who

asserts that he heard the most awful screeches coming from the ruins, but this was an isolated case, very vague and not of the circumstantial stuff out of which to make a ghost story.

V
INLAND SEAS

" Full of great rooms and small the palace stood
All various, each a perfect whole
From living Nature, fit for every mood
And change of my still soul.

. . . .

" One seem'd all dark and red—a tract of sand,
And some one pacing there alone,
Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,
Lit with a low large moon.

. . . . .

" And one, a full-fed river winding slow
By herds upon an endless plain,
The ragged rims of thunder brooding low,
With shadow-streaks of rain."

TENNYSON : *The Palace of Art*

HORSEY MERE

HORSEY MERE

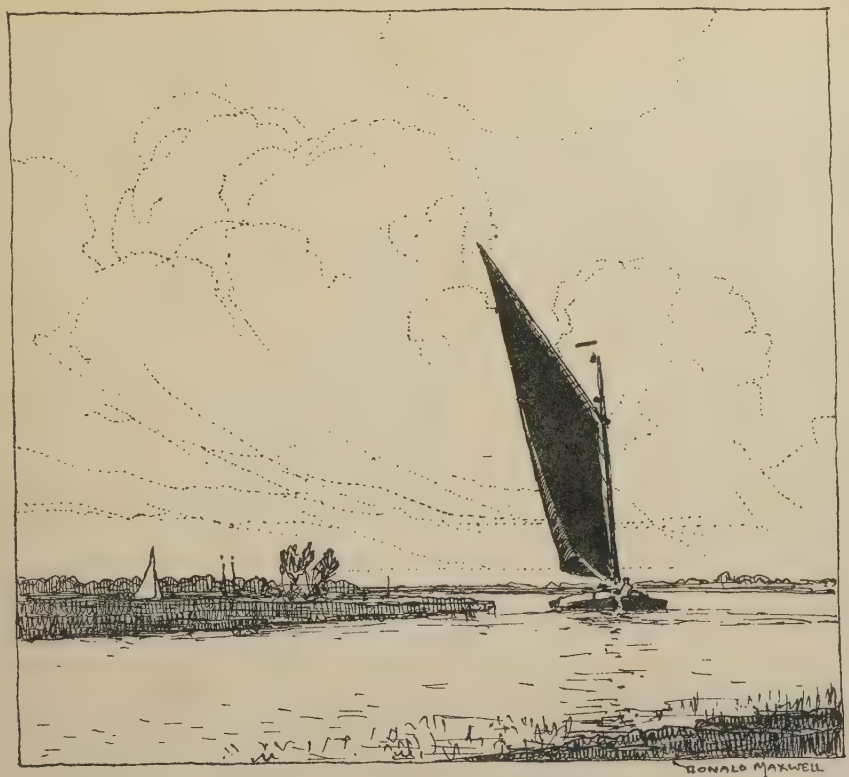
INLAND SEAS

THE *Penguin* lay for some time moored at Potter Heigham. With our dinghy we explored places both up and down the river. Besides a view of Wroxham Broad one sketch, Horning Ferry, I have shown at page 57, and others near St. Benet's Abbey (p. 77) and South Walsham Broad (p. 110).

The part of our explorations, however, which was made upon the waters above this bridge will show the characteristic type of these inland seas. One of my subjects, the one at the heading of this chapter, shows our objective, which

was Horsey Mere. You can just see the sandhills that divide the mere from the ocean, and on page 94 I have sketched nearer views beyond the village and across the narrow strip of land that leads on to the sea. These mountains of Norfolk are quite imposing when seen from time to time as you sail upon this little lake. There is a curious and eerie feeling about it all, especially upon a wild day when the North Sea is thundering and pounding away outside trying to break in and swamp the whole country-side, as it has done before in the chequered history of this coast. The solitary ruin of a church tower near Potter Heigham, with its base eaten away so that it looks as though it might fall, is one of the reminders of a time when the forces of the sea conquered all resistance. After much labour the land again prevailed, but this is the danger point, Horsey Gap. The planting of marram grass and other devices are palliatives to give cohesion to the shifting sandhills, but when there is a gale from the north-east, and when the huge seas begin to "strip" the beach there are anxious moments on the part of the vigilant authorities, whose duty it is to make good the ramparts of the coast.

The "voyage" from Potter Heigham to Horsey is a fascinating one. At first the river, bungalows, windmills, a glimpse of the "high" land of Martham crowned by a square tower and overlooking a Broad very little known; then Heigham Sound, a delightful series of vistas amongst the reeds, and then the broad expanses of Hickling Broad. The winding Meadow Dyke, with its many turnings, each of



A FAIR WIND

which we think is the last (but it never is), and, at length, a wonderful prospect, Horsey Mere, the little inland sea, its rush-fringed shores giving views from time to time of a mountain range, and proclaiming its kinship with the ocean.

Across the water and amidst thick trees stands a little house. I do not know who lives there, but I should not be surprised to hear that it belonged to Peter Pan. And then, by way of a narrow inlet that takes us round a corner, and we are alongside a staith and near a windmill, and ready to land and explore the village of Horsey and go down to the sea. I do not possess a guide-book, but I have kept a cutting someone once gave me. It is from a book dated 1870, but it is so defective that I cannot find out who wrote it and what the book or magazine is called. The article from which I am about to quote is entitled " Under the German Ocean." The writer of fifty-five years ago thus describes the coast :

" Proceeding Northwards from Great Yarmouth, past Caister, Somerton, and Winterton, as the pedestrian approaches Happisburgh, he finds a change taking place in the coast landscape. The last memento of the sand-dunes is Eccles Church, nearly buried in the drifting sands, with the exception of the upper portion of the round tower, which peeps above like some antediluvian well stripped of its extraneous covering. A good example this of the waste of our Norfolk coasts, which has been going on for ages. . . . An occasional church, with an unusually high tower, made to do duty in the olden times as a landmark, and pairs of white

lighthouses, intended to direct navigators through the intricate labyrinths of the sand-banks, are nearly all the traces of human presence the spectator can see from the shore."

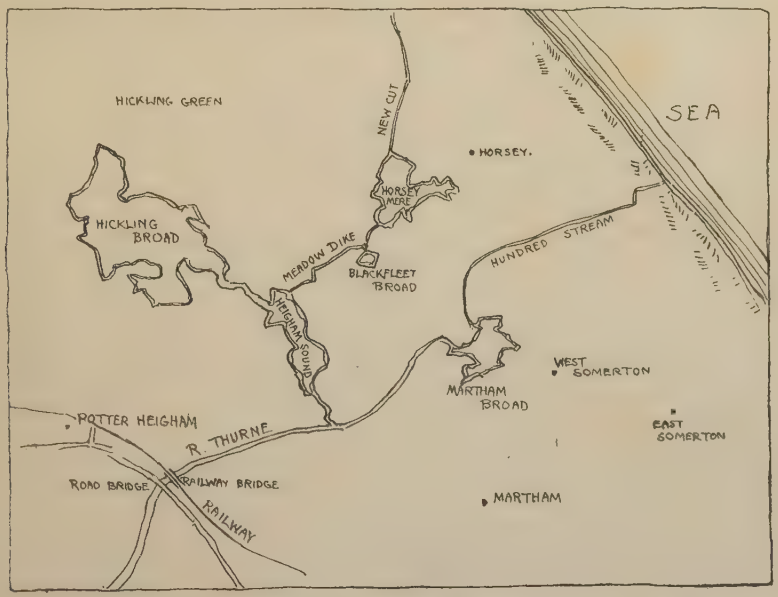
Then farther along the coast he describes what is " neither more nor less than an old forest-bed of immense antiquity. After one of the north-west gales already mentioned, there may be seen extensive patches and sheets of semi-indurated mud and turf which extend to the very margin of low water, and continue beneath it seawards for miles. . . . When examined, it is seen to contain hundreds of stools of trees, some of them four or five feet in diameter, and each with its roots spreading into the surrounding mud." The animal remains of this forest are those of prehistoric monsters and giant mammals.

" Elephants of at least *three* species, the largest of which, according to the late Dr. Falconer, could not have been less than sixteen or seventeen feet high. The tusk of one of these animals has been dug out, and although nearly three feet were broken off, it still measures ten feet in length, and is nearly three feet in circumference. The other animals known are a species of horse, much larger than the biggest Suffolk cart-horse, together with abundant remains of bear, hippopotami, rhinoceri, and beavers twice as large as any now living, deer, ox, goat," etc.

The interest aroused in the breasts of the *Penguin* exploring party was so great on reading this that it took all the

A CORNER OF WROXHAM BROAD

discipline I could raise to prevent our Broadland voyage being turned into an ivory-hunting expedition. It was argued that the *Penguin* might lie off the coast at anchor and at low tide we could land and dig. The disadvantages of finding ourselves on a lee shore and thus adding to the



THE THURNE BROADS AND THE SEA

curiosities found in the forest-bed did not deter anybody, but the sudden arrival of Brown on the scene took our attention to other matters.

Brown was full of a great scheme. He wanted to test the rights of landowners to close certain of the Broads. Some Wicked Landowners, he said, had defied the ancient

rights of a seafaring people to sail upon tidal waters without let or hindrance. He was full of the subject and burning, like Peter the Hermit, to raise a crusade and wrest the freedom of the seas from tyranny and greed.

His idea was to sail with a great and invincible Armada into the very heart of the forbidden waters and defy the feudal barons to do their worst. The *Penguin* would lead the van, and her probable likeness by moonlight to the *Victory* would be the Nelson touch which would strike terror into the forces of reaction.

It may be well at this stage of my story, and without prejudice of my account of Brown's escapade, to make a pause here and give some account of this controversy in hand. I am indebted for any knowledge I may have picked up on the matter to Mr. Walter Rye's work entitled *The Rights of Fishing, Shooting, and Sailing on the Norfolk Broads.* This little work is published by Jarrolds'. It was lent to me, is not very recent, and, unfortunately, bears no date.

I could wish incidentally that the law would compel every publication to be dated. It is a detestable habit of publishers to issue books without dating them, and causes more anger to me than anything, except the still more detestable practice, imported from America, of magazine stories beginning with great show in the early part of the volume and ending in elusive fragments amongst the advertisements.

Mr. Rye thus handles this subject :

" It must not be forgotten that if the public have—and

I cannot for a moment doubt that they have—a right to pass and repass in boats from staithe to staithe, it follows that as far as sailing boats are concerned, at all events, they may tack across and across to use the wind to best advantage, and are not limited to the direct line between staithe and staithe.

IN HICKLING BROAD

"It has become the fashion of so-called 'owners' of Broads to assume that the public have only a right to sail over a certain channel that they, owners, choose to mark out as 'the' navigable channel by post, as at Barton.

"But what right have they to assume that no boat drawing less than two or three feet of water should want to

sail over the Broads? I contend, as I said before, that wherever any boat of any sort can float, there man may go. When wild fowl were in plenty and fowlers few, is it to be supposed that they went after the duck in big boats? No doubt they went in boats closely resembling the present duck punts, and, in still earlier days, in wicker and hide built canoes, which would practically float anywhere.

"I very much doubt, too, whether the so-called channels were marked out by the lords of the manor at all. As at Barton, I fancy it was those merchants who traded up the rivers who paid for the staking out for their own safety and convenience; and if this is established there is an important piece of evidence against the sole proprietary right of the lords."

The case of Wroxham Broad and the right to fish thereon, on the assumption that it was tidal water and therefore part of the navigable system of the River Bure, was fought out and the fishermen lost. James Mace, David Harper, and William Blower were summoned at the Shirehall by Mr. Edward Southwell Trafford, "for that they did by angling take at Wroxham a certain fish, to wit, a roach of the value of one penny, then being in certain water there situate, such water being the private property of Edward Southwell Trafford, Esq., and not running through, or being in any land adjoining and belonging to the dwelling-house of any person being the owner of the said water, or having a right of fishing therein."

Mr. Chittock, who appeared for the prosecution, maintained that the only way to set up a right for the defendants was to prove that the Broad was *a tidal and navigable river*.

Mr. Rye records that this plea was not adequately set

THE HOUSE ON HORSEY MERE

up and that certain evidence that ought to have been brought forward was not brought forward.

" On the evidence before them," he writes, " the magistrates, therefore, could hardly have done anything else but

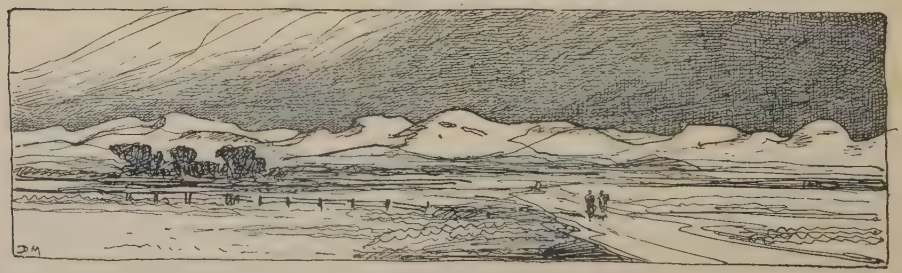
NEAR HORSEY GAP

convict. They gave a case, however, which went to the Queen's Bench on the 10th October, 1885 (Blower *v.* Ellis), when the decision of the justices was affirmed.

"The judges clearly did not have the matter properly put before them, or they would not have said what they did, e.g. Mr. Justice Smith being reported to have said that the Broad was 'not connected with the river' (!), and that 'the *only* access from the river had a gate and chain across the entrance.'" (!!)

Here is chapter and verse.

Blower, *Appellant*, *v.* Ellis, *Respondent.* Fishery—Inland lake, Norfolk Broad—Angling by strangers—Evidence of



RAMPARTS OF SAND

A COAST SCENE NEAR WINTERTON

tidal river. *Blower was charged under* 24 *and* 25 *Vict. c.* 96, *s*, 24, *with unlawfully taking fish in a private fishery. The water was part of a Norfolk Broad or lake*, 35 *miles from the sea. The evidence showed that the tides did not reach the spot, though occasionally the fresh water was backed up so as to rise three or four inches when there was a high tide. Anglers had occasionally been turned off if no consent of the adjoining landowners had been obtained.*

Held, *that there was sufficient evidence to support the finding of justices, that this was not a tidal navigable river where the public had a right to fish, but was a private fishery; and the conviction was held right.* Then follows a great deal of evidence concerning the problem of the "tidal" nature of Wroxham Broad. The actual finding of the justices is as follows:

1. That Wroxham Broad is not part of the River Bure, and is not in the nature of a public tidal and navigable river.

2. That the water in such Broad is not affected by ordinary tides, although at times the fresh water in it is held up by the rising of the salt water in the River Bure coming up from the sea.

3. That the part of the said Broad on which the offence was committed is private property.

4. That the Appellant had not made out such a reasonable claim of right, and such as could exist in law, as to oust our jurisdiction and require us to leave the parties to their civil remedies.

There is a great deal of amusing matter in these various

cases which all seem to hinge on the tidal or non-tidal nature of a Broad. In one case a landowner deliberately put posts and a chain across the entrance to a Broad and thus effectively closed it. The counsel for the defence in a prosecution for invading private waters actually used the argument that this Broad must be private water *because the only access to it was by passing under the chain, which was a sure sign of the water being privately owned and visited by the public only by deliberate trespass*. The argument was accepted and this (whether the water of the Broad were tidal or not) seems to be the high-water mark of legal quibbling.

One more case, that of Heigham Sounds, to which I have already alluded.

"In September, 1883, Mr. Boult, the lessee of these waters, summoned Mr. Lark and Mr. Crowther, two members of the Great Yarmouth Piscatorial Society, for fishing on them. Messrs. Overbury and Gilbert, the solicitors of Mrs. Petre, the owner of the Sounds, prosecuted, and Mr. Simms Reeve, who was instructed by Messrs. Harmer and Raddock of Yarmouth, again was for the defence. Mr. Gilbert's argument was that though the Sounds were navigable, they were not tidal. Mr. Reeve quoted the well-known case of R. *v.* Stimpson, where, the justices having convicted, their decision was reversed on the ground that there being a *bonâ fide* question of title raised by the defendant, the justices' jurisdiction was ousted. There was ample evidence that the water rose and fell, and that wherries sailed all over

WIND AND WATER

the Sounds, but, in spite of this, the magistrates were unanimously in favour of a conviction. A case was granted, and stated and argued before Justices Day and Smith, who referred it back to the justices for amendment. The amendments were, however, so unfavourable to the fishermen that counsel advised it was no use re-lodging the case for argument."

IN HORSEY VILLAGE

It seems that beside the law and the landowners there are other enemies to the fishing of Hickling Broad, Heigham Sound, and the Thurne. As I am correcting the last sheets of this book for press I find the following in the *Daily Mail* (November 4, 1925):

"Mysterious Destruction on the Broads

"During the past week practically the whole of the fish of Hickling Broad and Heigham Sound, Norfolk, has been destroyed.

"Water from the Broads has been taken for analysis, and some of the dead fish are being examined to find the cause of their death.

"For some days thousands of eels, bream, pike and rudd have been observed floating down the Thurne. . . .

"Thousands of herring gulls and a number of carrion crows have invaded Hickling Broad and Heigham Sound, feasting on the fish.

"One theory is that the very low barometric pressure on the day before the trouble began may have allowed marsh gas to be released from the bed of the Broads."

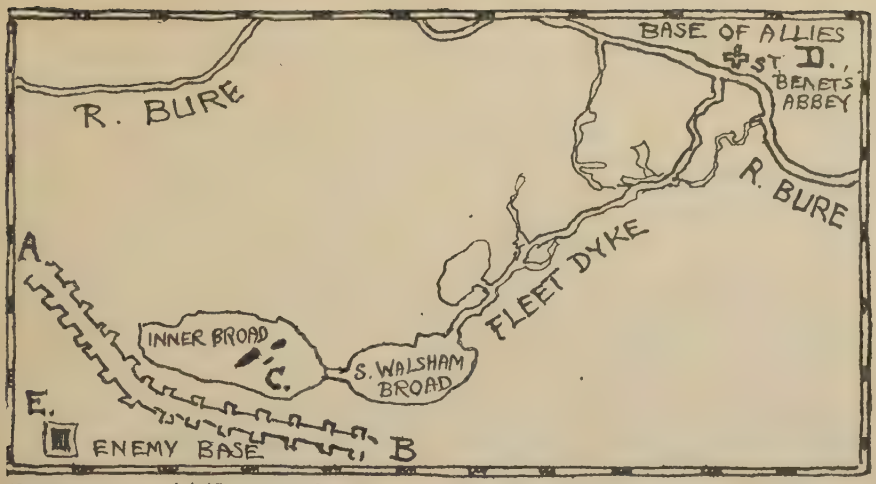
PENGUIN

VI

THE BATTLE OF SOUTH WALSHAM BROAD

" Peace hath her victories
No less renown'd than war."

MILTON



PLAN OF BATTLEFIELD

A—B REAL OR SUPPOSED POSITION OF THE ENEMY. C POSITION OF ALLIED FLEET. D ALLIED BASE. E ENEMY BASE

THE BATTLE OF SOUTH WALSHAM BROAD

TO Brown belongs the credit of the attack on the Wicked Landowners, and he must bear the indignity of various mistakes made in the great campaign. Frankly, we none of us knew anything about the matter, but by the time we had returned to Potter Heigham and got the *Penguin* under way, we were beginning to warm up to the subject. By the time we had reached Thurne Mouth we had so enthused that we felt we were doing battle for a just cause, and, primed by Brown with ancient quotations from the Hundred Rolls of Edward I, showing how the rights of our Lord the King

had been usurped, to the great damage of the whole country, "whereas such water is common to each one, and ought to be so by reason of the dignity of Our Lord the King, whose river it always was "—we would die in the attempt to regain those lost liberties. By the time we reached St. Benet's Abbey, which we made our base, we were convinced that John Hampden, the seven Bishops, and such protesters against tyranny " also ran," and that English History would be the richer for this great event foreshadowed.

We had been joined in our liberationist expedition by the *Busy Bee*, a small sailing craft, manned by two sturdy fellows, hereinafter referred to as X and Y. I choose these appellations out of consideration for our allies, in order that their identity may not be known. Otherwise they might be dragged into the libel action which I am sure will follow the publication of this narrative. In addition to this auxiliary cruiser was a brave man in a rowing boat who represented something in the nature of a destroyer, and could act as a wire-cutting advance guard if necessary and be useful for picking up dead and wounded who might fall overboard in the action.

St. Benet's Abbey is a strange place. It consists of a few walls, an old gateway, and a cone-shaped tower, incorporating these straggling vestiges of a monastery, and at one time having formed the masonry of a windmill, long since fallen into decay.

Into this weird meeting-place Brown assembled us all to give us his plan of campaign on the eve of battle, and

"CLEARED FOR ACTION AND FOLLOWED BY HER AUXILIARY FORCES, THE *PENGUIN* SAILED RIGHT UP INTO THE TERRITORY OF THE ENEMY"

a short historical and legal apologia of the glorious work that we were about to do. He addressed us rather in the manner of Queen Elizabeth haranguing her troops at Tilbury, and he reminded us that in theory all navigable and tidal waters were common, and could not be enclosed by means of barriers, chains, and the like without encroaching upon the common rights. A recent decision, however, in law, had held that there was no tide where the fresh water was merely pushed up and down by the salt tide lower down. In that case there was no tide at Putney Bridge, which was absurd. Various fishing cases had been decided against the right of fishing in these "enclosed" waters. The Law we know is an ass, but possession is nine points of the law, and unless yachtsmen and sportsmen protested against the closing of certain waters it would soon be too late. The Abbot of St. Benedict, in whose Abbey we now stand, was one of the first offenders, and the Hundred Rolls for Norwich (Ed. I) record several complaints "that he unjustly appropriated to himself water and fishing which should be of the King and Commons"; also the Abbot "unjustly appropriates to himself water and fishery which ought to be the King's and Commons' from the Bridge of Weybridge to Wroxham Bridge."

It is now or never. The inner Broad of South Walsham is a classic case. It is affected by the tide and is therefore part of the navigable channels of the river. Brown asserted that on good authority he had learned that a chain defence was stretched across the entrance and that man-traps and

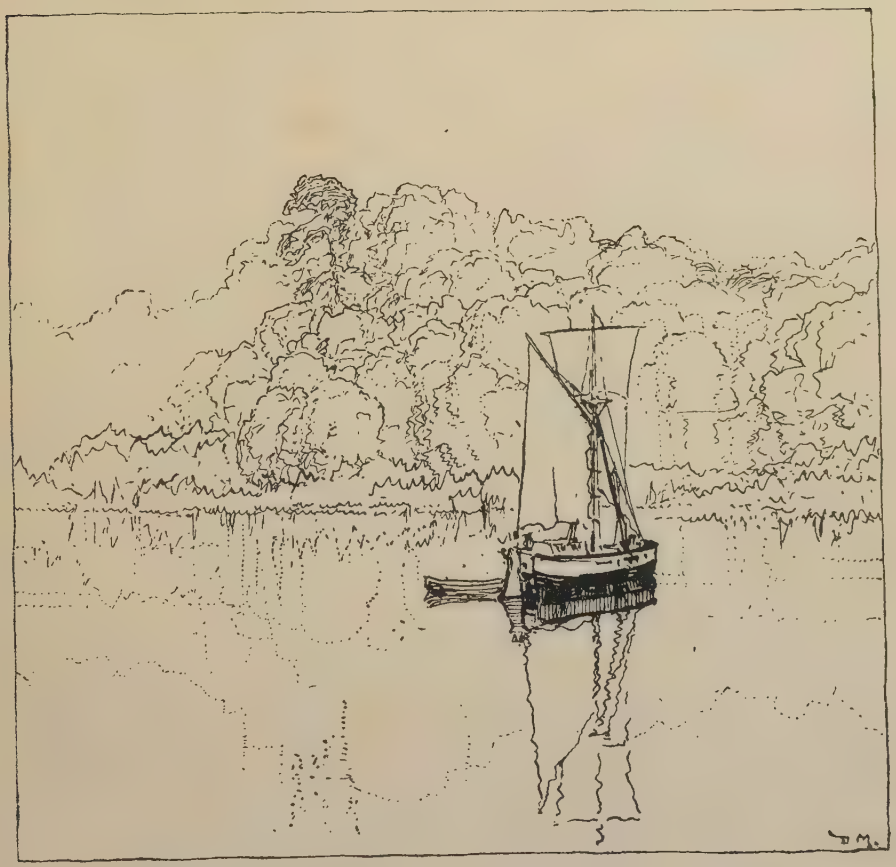
spring guns—and, who knows, probably mines—are the effective means of closing an ancient right of way.

"I have been giving close study," continued Brown, "to the tactics employed at the famous siege of Londonderry, and can see a very close parallel in South Walsham Broad. If the ships of the Orange forces could break through the defences of Londonderry, I am convinced that the *Penguin* could utterly demolish a small chain, and the freedom of the seas will be a fact once more and not a theory only. The tyranny of the Wicked Landowners towards yachtsmen shall be broken. They have gone too far, and revenge is at hand. If Wat Tyler could rouse the country against the Crown merely through popularity caused by his killing an Income Tax collector—(loud cheers)—surely we shall be made perpetual honorary members of all the yacht clubs in England when the great coup comes off. Our slogan shall be, not 'Victory or Westminister Abbey,' but 'Victory or Maidstone Gaol.'"

The upshot of all this was that we manned our ships and prepared to start on the afternoon flood tide. Our tactics were simple, and our plan was bold. Cleared for action and followed by her auxiliary forces, the *Penguin* sailed right up into the territory of the enemy.

Although Brown was in command of operations and director of strategy, I was still captain of the ship and was more or less in the position of the *sailing master* of olden days. The consequence of leaving a ship to Brown is inevitably that she will be, sooner or later, wrecked. To get an idea of the

"WE WERE THE FIRST THAT EVER BURST
INTO THAT SILENT SEA"



"AS IDLE AS A PAINTED SHIP
UPON A PAINTED OCEAN"

enemies' country, I stationed myself in the crow's nest and shouted directions to the whole fleet.

Ahead lay a very narrow and somewhat tortuous channel.

"THE WICKED LANDOWNER'S HOUSE"

The fact that we had a following wind was our one chance of making South Walsham Broad. On either side were stretches of marsh land, here and there intersected by creeks

or reed-covered swamps. Ahead would be seen the two towers of South Walsham and the well-wooded ridge that rose beyond the Broad.

The wind freshened, and we reached the outer Broad. Then, preparing for a desperate attack on the boom defence, we made our way into the narrow entrance, between fringes of trees. There was no chain, however, unless it was under the water, and the greatest opposition we encountered were two notice boards, which announced that there was no objection to sailing in the Broad, but that fishing, shooting, and mooring without permission were forbidden. This was rather an anti-climax. According to popular legend and to Brown there was to be strenuous and, if necessary, sanguinary opposition.

We did not know whether or not the forces of tyranny and feudalism were in sight, and whether or not they observed our advent. If so, they must have been astonished. I do not suppose any vessel as large as the *Penguin* has been up into this Broad. I am certain that no craft carrying yards and square canvas had been there before. As far as this kind of rig is concerned we should say with The Ancient Mariner, " We were the first that ever burst into that silent sea."

I made a signal for the whole fleet to shorten sail and stand by their anchors. When exactly in the middle of the Broad I gave the command " Let go!" and a classic case of vessels coming up on tidal water from the sea and anchoring had been established. We wondered, however, what would happen next.

FLEET DYKE

As a matter of fact, nothing happened. The beauty of South Walsham Broad is great. The evening was a lovely one. Instead of doing battle, we spent our time admiring the view. The wind dropped to a flat calm, and there we lay, " as idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean."

It does not sound very heroic, but the next item in the campaign I have to record is that I went ashore in the dinghy through the outer Broad to buy some butter. While I was ashore a gamekeeper put off in a small boat and politely ordered the *Penguin* and *Busy Bee* to leave. Pointing out, however, that the captain of *Penguin* was ashore, and that there was no wind at all, compliance was impossible. So night fell, and the fleet lay at anchor, awaiting developments in the morning. It is characteristic of Brown that although he inflames us all with speeches before the event, he suggests that I am the proper person to go up and interview the feudal lord.

I do so, and am received with great courtesy and no little amusement by the Wicked Landowner, who is none other than Sir Bartle Frere. I propose the terms of an armistice. We mutually agree. Peace reigns. Incidentally I hear another side of the argument from Brown's and various " agitating " yachtsmen. Beyond an academic difference of opinion concerning " mooring " and " anchoring " (which in my mind is a very great difference) and where a tide ends, we cordially agree.

Sir Bartle Frere told me that he was always glad to see yachts and boats enjoying the inner Broad, and he never had

refused permission. It is desirable, however, in the interests of yachtsmen as well as anybody else, to keep out any possible "tripper" element, if the danger arose. At present, it has not arisen, and with such Wicked Landowners as the genial owner of the South Walsham Broad I do not think difficulties will ever arise. If they do I have offered to place the *Penguin* and her auxiliary forces at his disposal and for his protection.

VII

THE MYSTERY OF PEDDAR'S WAY

Alas, that the longest hill
Must end in a vale ; but still,
Who climbs with toil, wheresoe'r,
Shall find wings waiting there.

H. C. BEECHING,
Dean of Norwich

THE MYSTERY OF PEDDAR'S WAY

IT was not in the *Penguin*, but on foot, that Brown and I decided to explore that intriguing track marked variously upon the map as Peddar Way, Peddar's Way, and Peddar's Road. Before starting out we spread out a one-inch Ordnance Survey map and tried to decipher its meaning.

Although it has been stated frequently that this was a Roman road linking Brancaster, that important fortress of the "Saxon Shore," with Colchester, the evidence is by no means conclusive. The general direction is right enough, and there is evidence of the Romans having used this road,

but that is a very different thing from recognizing it as one of the made Roman roads. A classic case of this type of military road is Stone Street from Canterbury to Lympne. It runs quite straight but for one little kink easily explained.

PEDDAR'S WAY GOING OUT OF CASTLE ACRE TO THE NORTH

It leads to nowhere but to Lympne, and to this day there are no places of any importance upon it.

Peddar's Way, however, does not seem to come into this category. Its position, running for the most part along a

crown of upland, where the chalk hill swells up from the fen on one side and the low-lying arable land on the other, seems to suggest a much older road. It is a *natural road* like the Pilgrim's Way on the South Downs, and probably dates from

"WE REGARDED THIS GRASS ROAD WITH GRAVE SUSPICION"

prehistoric times, although Roman legions, Saxon conquerors, Norman barons, and mediæval pilgrims may all have used it in turn.

Brown, who is nothing if not untrammelled from all

tradition as a topographist, boldly spread out a map of England and asked me if there was not some probability of Peddar's Way leading to Lincolnshire.

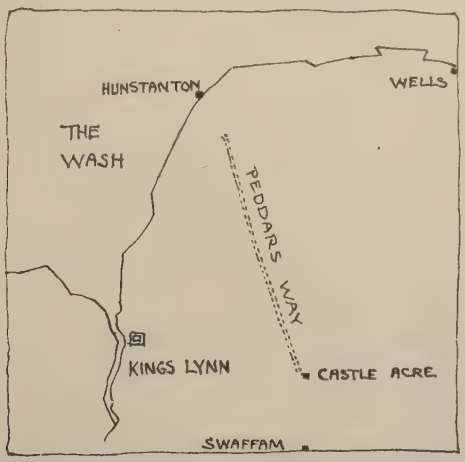
The formation of land across the way is similar, and Brown suggested that a ridge of chalk ran right away to the Wolds, and at one time made a continuous chain of downs. At a later epoch the middle of this sank or the sea broke through and so made the Wash. He suggested crossing the Wash in a sailing boat and verifying his theory by examining the coast-line on the other side.

At present, however, we would make our way to Castle Acre and take the section that runs to the north, towards Hunstanton. We did not go into Castle Acre, reserving that till later, but, pushing on while it was still light, took the road marked Peddar's Way on the map. It did not show as yet any very exciting features, and the general appearance of it I have sketched on page 120. Later on we left Peddar's Way, or what we thought was Peddar's Way, on our left and kept to the road meaning to rejoin it later. It was my idea, and my reason was that I knew there could be no inns upon the rough track and Brown's enthusiasm generally meant fasting as rigorous as the Mohammedan Ramadan.

When at last we took a road to the left we struck a grass track and I immediately started sketching. Brown, however, got busy on the map and pronounced this road as a delusion and a snare. It was not the Peddar's Way at all, but a base imitation—a section similar in appearance running parallel with the genuine one. I went on sketching. From

THE [illegible] VILLE

the point of view of a picture it would do as well as the other track ; but we regarded this grass road with grave suspicion and determined not to be taken in by it. Then we found the real way and pursued it up hill and down dale—or rather up and down on the hill—until we came to the pleasant and open section, some semblance of which I have sketched on page 127.



PEDDAR'S WAY, HUNSTANTON TO CASTLE ACRE

By the time we regained Castle Acre night had fallen and the moon was up. The ruins of the Priory, as we came upon them, stood out in weird and startling eeriness.

"Here," exclaimed Brown, "are the ghosts that Henry VIII created. The glory is departed but the ghosts remain."

Some lights were moving to and fro amongst the ruins, but these turned out to be caused not by the restless spirits of the deposed monks, but by a pair of quite harmless archæologists viewing the ruins.

The curious name, Castle Acre, led to an amusing incident when the inhabitants of this part of Norfolk petitioned the King against Sir Edward Coke acquiring any more land on the grounds that he was becoming a dangerous monopolist.

KING'S BRIDGE, THETFORD

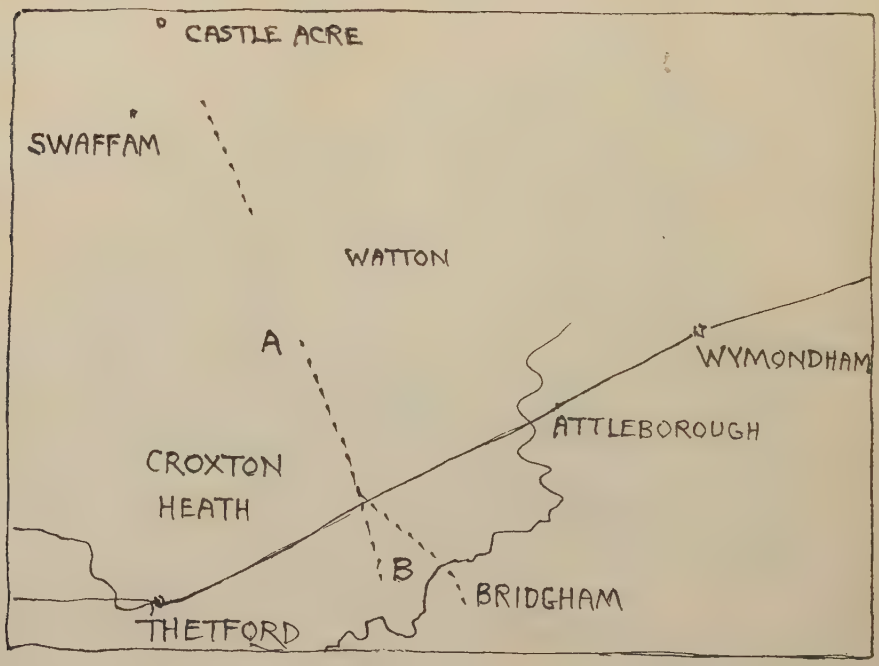
When the matter was put to him in the form of a remonstrance, he said he would be quite content to cease buying any more land if he could have just one more acre. The officers of the Crown readily agreed, thinking he wanted this

for some sentimental reason, and were quite pleased that their wishes had been so readily respected. Then Sir Edward Coke bought the estate of Castle Acre and nearly doubled his holding in land.

THE WATER MILL AT THETFORD

Would that I could sojourn longer in Castle Acre with my sketch-book. There is a field for a whole book concerning this place alone. The Castle itself is a vast mass of earth, denuded of much stonework—stonework which can

be seen in many a house around here—but still impressive in its ruin. In odd corners of the cottages and buildings of Castle Acre can be seen lingering survivals of the vanished



TRACES OF PEDDAR'S WAY

glory of the Priory in the form of carved stones and grotesque gargoyles.

Traces of the Peddar's Way occur near Swaffham and it

crosses the Thetford-Norwich road to the west of Croxton Heath. At Watton, which stands to the left of this track as we go south, is a wood named Wayland Wood, or Wailing

THE GRASS TRACK OF PEDDAR'S WAY

Wood, where the wicked uncle hired robbers to kill the Babes in the Wood. It is popularly supposed to be named Wayland Wood because the children were *waylaid* there, or,

if you prefer the other spelling, because you can still hear them *wailing* on the night of the dread anniversary.

It is claimed that this story has a basis of actual fact, and that it was a Norfolk man of these parts who on his death-bed confided his two children to his brother, and that this brother, to get their property, hired assassins to make away with them. Picturesque details have been added generation after generation, until—in my young days—the very names of the robbers could be vouched for and it had got to this :

Now one of the robbers
(His name it was Bob)
He wasn't a bad sort
And he hated the job
So he went for the other
(His name it was Ned)
And slayed him all over
Until he was dead
Singing :
Doddle doddle doddle chip cham chee choorily lay !
Singing :
Doddle doddle doddle chip cham chee choorily lay !

South of the Thetford-Norwich road the Peddar's Way is lost. I cannot help thinking that the name Bridgham at the River Thet is significant. A bridge here must be for a road going south. The road to Norwich crosses the Thet higher up, near Attleborough. This, however, is mere conjecture, and in any case there is no trace left on the map, and so far as I can see on the land of this ancient way. It ends near Thetford as it begins near Hunstanton in mystery.

Thetford is one of those " shrunk cities " that lives on

"AT HUNSTANTON THERE USED TO BE A LIGHTHOUSE AT THE TOP OF THE CLIFF. IT IS DARK NOW, BUT THE REMAINS OF IT, DISMANTLED, ARE STILL TO BE SEEN FROM THE SEA!"

the reputation of its former glory, when it could boast of twenty churches and when, before these days of architectural greatness, it was the " Metropolis of the Heptarchy."

There is much to sketch here, but I have room only for King's Bridge and the mill. Near Thetford, too, is much interesting and invaluable afforestation in progress, and under the Government department responsible are large tracts of young larch and other deciduous trees.

On a subsequent occasion I had an opportunity of beginning, if not completing, Brown's experiment of sailing from Hunstanton across the Wash and studying the opposing coast-lines where the Peddar's way ridge breaks off at the sea. I joined some friends in a small yacht at King's Lynn and we cruised up the coast. King's Lynn has in it sufficient to keep an artist and historian a long time at work ; and Castle Rising also, its near neighbour. There is an old rhyme which tells of the changed relations of the two places, for ancient as King's Lynn seems to us, it was an upstart town once, as this bit of doggerel relates :

Rising was a seaport town
When Lynn was but a marsh ;
Now Lynn it is a sea-port,
And Rising fares the worse.

So insignificant a place did Castle Rising become that it is recorded that only three persons were qualified as members of its Corporation, and that these would meet and elect each other to the office of Mayor in rotation every year. At one time the Mayor of Rising was a thatcher, and he was driving

a cartload of hay along the road when the load began to slip off. He stopped and asked a passer by to help him. That stranger, so accosted, stood on his dignity.

"Do you know," he said, "that you are asking this favour of the Mayor of Lynn?"

"Man," replied the hay-carter, "that don't make no odds. I'm the Mayor of Castle Rising!"

Of the stories of struggles with the sea and the liability of this country-side to inundation here is a quaint tale of 1607 which combines exciting adventure with moral instruction:

"In the county of Norfolke, not far from King's Lynn, in a place called March-land, happened accidents very violente and mortall. . . . It happened upon a night, for when is danger more wakeful than when prevention sleeps, and not so much as dreams of his furies? A couple of Horse-Coursers (or Horse Stealers) knowing the night, a gowne to cloake their villanie, came sneeking into the marsh with an intent to make a market of what was none of their owne. They drove so many of the Cattle as they thought fit up into the hygher grounds, but in the mean time they were hotly pursued with a fearfull Hue and Cry, not of Constables, but swifter followers, viz.: the water, which having broken out in an old breach, in a quarter of an houre overflowed the Marsh, that they were enforced to leave their praye and fall to prayer. And these two fellows (against their will made good) got the Keyes of the Church Door and jangled the bells."

THE CLIFFS OF HUNSTANTON

This quaint account goes on to describe with graphic horrors the inundation of the country-side and tells how horses, men, goods, and chattels floated about and forced people to "swimme aboute up and down with drowned people so confusedly mingled as men could scarce distinguish their friends."

The cliffs of Hunstanton are principally remarkable for their strange colouring. I here show this in a sketch of the headland facing page 132.

There are two strata—one, this uppermost, of white chalk and the other of a kind of clay stained red by iron. The effect in places is quite unreal, and I can never help comparing it, when I see it, with those piles of red and white coco-nut icing you can see in the windows of a sweet shop.

At Hunstanton there used to be a lighthouse at the top of the cliff. It is dark now, but the remains of it, dismantled, are still to be seen; and from the sea, from where I have made my sketch as we skirted the cliffs on the beginning of the ebb, a bank extends for a long distance in a spit which dries at low water. At the sea end of this is a lightship marking the channel into Lynn.

Brown's theory of the Peddar's Way extending upon the summit of this chalk ridge to Lincolnshire does not seem so mad after all. There are difficulties however. What happened for instance, to the rivers that flow into the wash.

Brown says that they may have had an outlet through the valleys now formed by the Little Ouse and the Waveney, thus making Norfolk an island. I will not hazard a guess.

It is just possible. In fact, the map gives some encouragement. If you follow the Little Ouse to its source you will come to a point within only a few hundred feet of the river Waveney to-day. If this land were twenty feet lower through this zone there would be a tidal channel from sea to sea.

The exigencies of bad weather cut short our exploration and drove us back to Lynn. So the mystery of Peddar's Way is still a mystery.

HUNSTANTON

VIII

A WINTER'S TALE

" The best benefit we derive from history is the enthusiasm which it excites."

GOETHE.

A WINTER'S TALE

ONE morning in January I awoke to find myself in Norwich. I do not mean to suggest that I was not in Norwich when I went to bed, but I had arrived overnight, dead tired, had slept like a log. Consequently, when I turned and looked out of the window to find the whole world a fantasy in white and silver, I did not at first realize where I was. There, without doubt, was a magic casement, and through a maze of tropical ferns across some of the panes and snow encrustation upon others, I beheld a vast building many-buttressed rising into a turquoise sky. For a few

moments I thought I was still in dreamland, and then I began to recognize the familiar features of Norwich's great church and remembered where I was.

Brown had some friends in Norwich, and these had invited me to stay with them for the purpose of obtaining good pictorial copy for my book. Delighted as I was to make the acquaintance of Brown's friends, I submitted that to write volumes on Norwich would be asking for trouble in a book concerning the unknown ; but Brown, with his usual enthusiasm, had overborne all scruples and had brought me up to the scratch. He had been here for some days studying the subject, and when he arrived in person in a wonderfully patterned dressing-gown and insisted on me partaking of tea and bananas, I could see by his manner that he had some deep-laid project in the way of a sketch-book adventure.

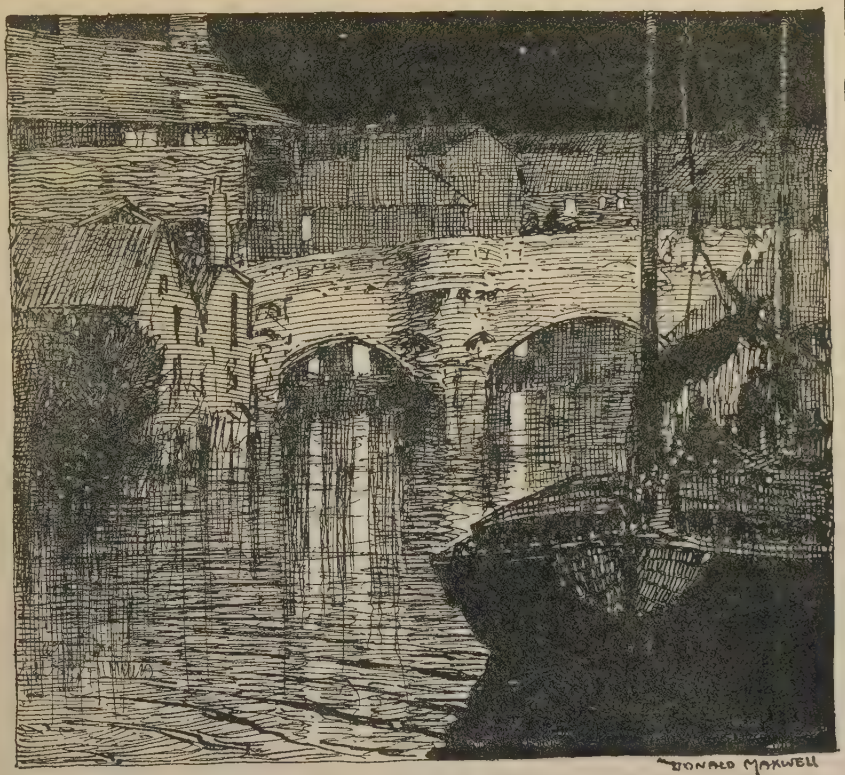
" To-morrow," he pronounced in his usual authoritative way, " we are to become detectives. We will begin with a topographical adventure which you will entitle ' The Clue of the Worsted Thread.' "

" And meanwhile ? " I asked.

" Meanwhile, I will endeavour to show you Norwich," he replied.

" But I know something about Norwich," I protested. " Do not you remember that we came here in the *Penguin* ? "

" True ; but I have discovered another Norwich—an Unknown Norwich, but it is very shy and retiring and on the slightest provocation will vanish altogether. Twilight is the best time to see it, or by the light of the moon, or on a day



"SOMETIMES ON A MOONLIGHT NIGHT, MODERN NORWICH DISAPPEARS AND THE NORWICH OF THE MIDDLE AGES SILENTLY TAKES ITS PLACE"

like this when common things are etherealized and touched into beauty by the snow. I will tell you all about it, for it is a bit early for breakfast yet."

"Say on," I replied, with the patient air of a martyr, but really glad of an excuse to remain tucked up in bed.

"There is a Norwich—the Norwich that *you* know—with a railway station, a post office and a library, but that is quite intangible and unreal. [You will notice that when Brown gets worked up he invariably talks to me as if I were a hopeless philistine and a gross materialist devoid of any spark of artistic sense.] But there is another Norwich—the Norwich of the Middle Ages.

"Sometimes on a moonlight night modern Norwich disappears and the Norwich of the Middle Ages silently takes its place. It was the Middle Ages that made Norwich world-famous, and those days—the days of the East Anglian merchant princes—dominate it even now.

"You must remember some outline of its history if you would be in the psychic condition to see these visions and dream these dreams.

"An old doggerel reminds us of the origin of Norwich :

> Caister was a city when Norwich was none,
> And Norwich was built with Caister stone.

"There is another Caister a few miles south of Norwich, so it appears to be on a Roman line of communication, and the use of a Roman camp as a stone quarry is a commonplace of Saxon and early mediæval history.

" In those days, too, it must be remembered that Norwich was almost ' upon sea ' and it was a fishing town. When Yarmouth arose it was regarded by the men of Norwich as an upstart place, but, upstart or no, it soon began to cut out the older port, as more easily accessible.

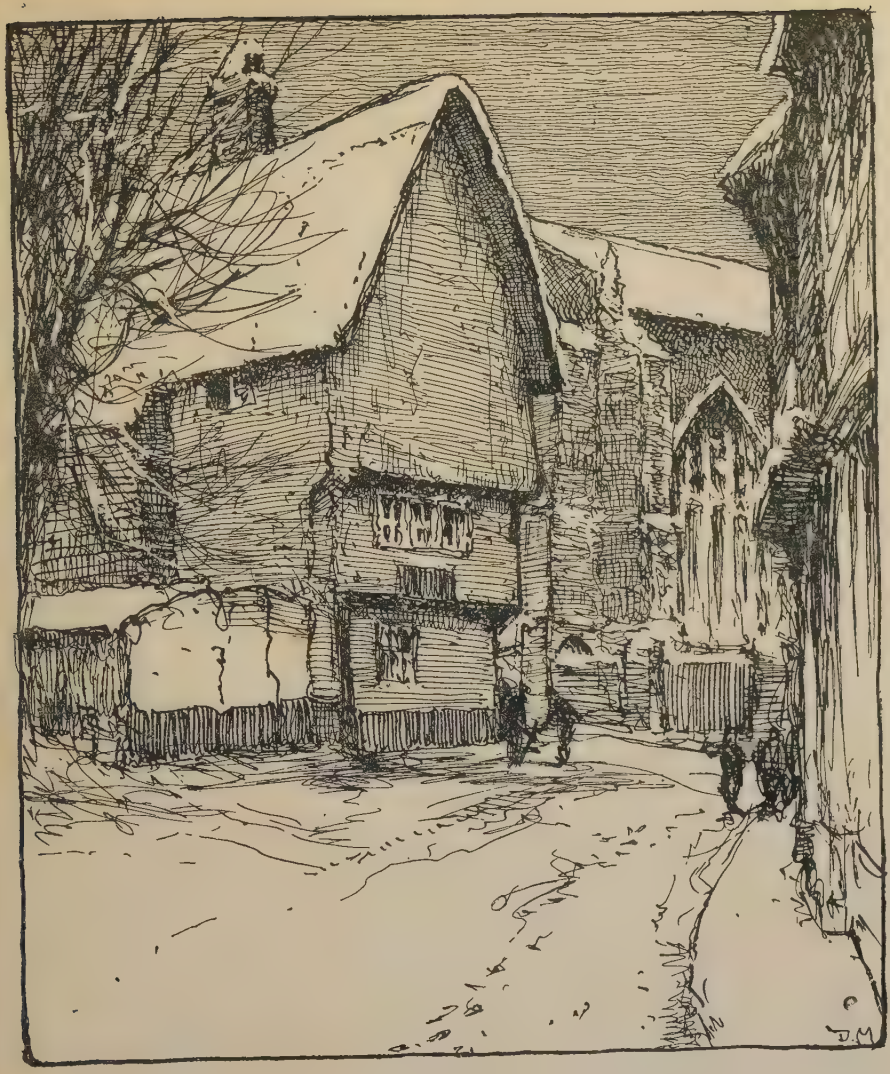
" The jealousy between the two places was proverbial, and a ' trade interest feud ' raged for centuries. As an example of ' cattiness,' the petition of the burghers of Great Yarmouth to the King to grant them quantities of lead for the repair of their piers and suggesting that the lead of the roof of that large but useless building in Norwich—to wit, Norwich Cathedral—would be acceptable.

" The great days of Yarmouth commenced in the reign of Edward III, and began with the advent of the Flemish weavers. Hitherto East Anglian wool had been exported to Flanders, Bruges being one of the greatest markets. (Have you ever noticed the similarity of Norwich and Bruges ?)

" The great smuggling industry of those days was to get wool over to the Continent without the expense of a licence and sell at slightly under market rates at an enormous profit.

" The coming of the Flemish weavers and the establishment of a huge industry which made the whole county prosperous did not prevent the British workman from grumbling at the foreigners. The British workman then, as now, was never very farseeing and was always getting up riots and disturbances against his best interests.

" To such a pitch did this ' anti-foreign ' attitude get



THE OLDEST INN OF NORWICH

that many of the foreign weavers (English born, but of foreign descent) left Norwich for Holland and other less narrow-minded English towns, so that Norwich became much shrunk and decayed, and it was actually debated in Parliament whether or no, owing to its deserted and ruinous condition, the city or the greater part of it had better be pulled down!

"Concerning that part of Norfolk history, however, we will get busy to-morrow. There are heaps of things in Norwich that I shall want to show you to-day.

"I must take you to a strange scene. At the back of the Grey Friars is an untouched fragment of the Middle Ages. There stands an inn said to be the oldest inn of Norwich city. It is now called the 'Britons Arms,' but I am sure it was not known thus in the Middle Ages. We were often at war with the Scots then, and I am sure no Scotsman would have been tolerated who wanted to call everything English by the name of British——"

"All right," I interrupted; "you need not rub it in. You know I am not one of the enthusiasts of Scotland who read Scotland into everything and scorn to speak the King's British."

"When we have 'done' the oldest inn of Norwich," continued Brown, "I will give you another glimpse of the Middle Ages—the cloisters of St. Helen's Hospital. I do not choose this because it is the oldest example of architecture in the city. There are many older. I want you to see it, because it is the Middle Ages not dead and preserved, but

alive. People live there, and you can get glimpses of kitchens through vistas of Gothic arches, and you find little genre subjects as you see them in old Dutch paintings.

" Part of the Hospital is made out of a church, the sanctuary being still preserved as a chapel. Upon the outside of the building is a tablet setting forth in rather a fulsome manner the wonderful virtue of a monarch and his successors, who, having stolen communistic property for private use, gave *some of it* back again and thus set an example to Bill Sikes and other less scrupulous ' conveyers ' who keep all the ' swag.'

" The tablet reads as follows :

King Henry the Eight of Noble Fame
Bequeath'd this City, this Comodious Place.
With Lands and Rents he did Endow the same,
To help decreped Age in woful Case.
Edward the Sixth that Prince of Royal stem,
Perform'd his Father's generous Bequest.
Good Queen Elizabeth imitating them,
Ample Endowments added to the Rest.
Their pious Deeds we gratefully record
While Heaven them crowns with glorious Reward.

" There were many things done by Henry VIII in the dissolution of the monasteries which are inexplicable.

" Why, for instance, if a monastery was to be secularized

IN THE CLOISTERS, ST. HELEN'S HOSPITAL

was it necessary to pull it down? The refectories and living quarters of a monastic building were valuable property, and although a case might have been worked up against shrines and churches as having been put to superstitious use, I cannot see any sense in pulling down a good dining-room."

"If I may be allowed to check, for a moment, the flow of your discourse," I put in, "may I suggest an answer to your question? Without wishing to hold a brief for an old blackguard like Henry VIII, I cannot help thinking that he was a man of very shrewd sense—in his own interest. A turn of the political tide might undo his dissolution tactics, and if the buildings were still intact all the monks and nuns might come trooping back again. If there were no monasteries the various orders, however zealous they became, would have rather a thin time with nowhere to live a community life. If you want to start a society for discouraging people from riding in taxi-cabs it is quite a good move to destroy all the taxis."

"It is difficult to find much evidence," continued Brown, "as to what the 'common people' thought about the dissolution of the monasteries. Most of the writers we can consult are violent partizans on one side or the other. According to Cobbett, who was a Protestant of Protestants, the farmer and peasant classes were much worse off under the monks' successors, the 'rack renters.'

"There were often rows between the monasteries and the town people of Norwich, at one time reaching to such

seriousness that they ended in a pitched battle. Yet the people of Norfolk could not be accused of anti-clericalism.

" In the great rebellion organized by Kett, which ended in the battle of Mousehold Heath and the hanging of Kett, one of the principal demands in the appeal of the people for reform was that provision should be made for the children of 'poore people' to be taught the catechism and that priests should be provided to do this efficiently.

" Just imagine this demand translated into the terms of our modern life. Picture if you can a great mob of coal-porters and costermongers marching to Whitehall and demanding almost truculently that their children should be taught their catechism ; or think of a deputation of waitresses from Lyons' restaurants appealing to the Crown for more thorough grounding in the principles of the Thirty-Nine Articles."

A later visitor to East Anglia and one who left valuable records of his travels was Daniel Defoe, who came of a Huguenot family from Provence. The old name of the family was De Foix, and Defoe is a spelling changed to a phonetic rendering. He had especial interest in the crafts of spinning and weaving in Norfolk because of his kinship with the refugees who had established the industry.

Of the country from Norwich northwards he writes (1722) : " There are several good market towns and innumerable villages, all diligently applying to the woolen manufacture, and the country is exceedingly fruitful and fertile, as well in corn as in pastures ; particularly, which was very

ST. MARY THE LESS, NORWICH

pleasant to see, pheasants were in such great plenty as to be seen in the stubbles like cocks and hens—a testimony, though, by the way, that the country had more tradesmen than gentlemen in it! . . . with the seafaring men on the one side and the manufacturers on the other, we saw no idle hands here."

"Another place you must see, because it fits in with our quest to-morrow, is the old Church of St. Mary-the-Less, standing on the south side of Tombland.

"It is now used by the community known as the Catholic Apostolic Church, commonly called the Irvingites, and is a small building somewhat hidden away.

"Some aspects of this church are best seen from a little court behind it, but from any point of view it is very much built in.

"This building and some fragments of a cloister at the back of the Grey Friars are particularly interesting as having at one time been wool markets. St. Mary the Less in 1564 was fitted up by the city at a cost of £43 as a 'Hall for Strangers for Searching and Sealing their Goods.' The laws and bylaws were numerous and disputes many. Here is a quaint entry in the second Assembly Book, thirty-two years before this date."

Here Brown produced a pencil document that he had copied out:

"Whereas the chief and principal lyvyng of a grette multitude of poore people wtin this citie heretofore ben hadde

many yeeres of mentil warpe, small offe and heryll yarn, which is nowe moche soore and grevouslye mynysshed of late so muche that many poore people havying non oder provysion for their lyvyng but oonely such spynny ben compelled for pure nede to axe ther mete and drynk for Cristes sake.

" Things had sadly declined since the middle of the fourteenth century (just before the Black Death, 1348), when ' Norwich was in the most flourishing state she ever saw. . . . There were no less than 60 parish churches, besides some conventual churches within its walls. . . . There were upwards of 70,000 sawles in the city and its suburbs, all which prosperity had been caused by the woolen trade ' established by the Netherlanders.

" In Henry VIII's reign, 1523, a warden chosen by the weavers of Yarmouth was yearly to be sworn by the Mayor of Norwich. Lynn was to be treated in the same manner. Y. and L. were marked on the respective goods, and no clothes whatever made in Yarmouth or Lynn could be dyed except in the City of Norwich, nor exported unless they were first dyed there.

" When Queen Elizabeth in 1578 made a royal progress through Norfolk the weavers of Norwich, although trade had decayed, made a brave show. The Mayor ordered all the houses to be repaired and a ' strange pageant ' in St. Stephen's Street took place to entertain the royal visitor. Various patriotic and pious mottoes were emblazoned around,

NSET AND SNOW

but the special feature of the great show was a sevenfold weaving scene. Seven weavers were weaving as follows :

The 1st the weaving of worsted.
The 2nd the weaving of russels.
The 3rd the weaving of dornix.
The 4th the weaving of mockado.
The 5th the weaving of lace.
The 6th the weaving of caffa.
The 7th the weaving of fringe.

" Another link in the chain of evidence started by the clue of the worsted thread is but a name, but one of great significance—Worthstede Row. I need not remind you that Worthstede is an old and purer form of the name Worstead, and comes from the Saxon 'Worth' (an enclosed or protected area), and 'stede' (a place). Worstead was the pioneer yarn spinning centre before Norwich came into the business, and it is probable, although this 'Row' has been rebuilt and is little more than a name, that the name is some evidence of the coming of weavers from Worstead to Norwich and setting up there. Thus their Row became known as the Worthstede Row.

" We will go into all that to-morrow, but there is just one more thing that you must sketch—I wish you could do it in colour and rival Turner—the Rialto Bridge."

" The Rialto Bridge?" I asked. " I thought that was in Venice."

"So it is," replied Brown; "but there is a ghostly view of it here in some lights. It is really a bridge of ferro-concrete, but at a distance I have seen this make for a wonderful effect, set, as it is, over still waters and backed by dim towers that loom beyond it."

I promised that I would see if I could make a sketch of it, even if it was only a slight and scribbled impression for the tail piece of a chapter.

THE RIALTO BRIDGE ON THE GRAND CANAL OF THE WENSUM

IX

THE CLUE OF THE WORSTED THREAD

" Society is founded upon cloth."

CARLYLE

WORSTEAD

THE CLUE OF THE WORSTED THREAD

WORSTEAD is a place known throughout the English-speaking world, although many people think that they have never heard of it. It is one of the very few places in England, like Abinger Hammer in Surrey, where the name of an industry is associated with a place. In this case it is really the other way round, and the name of the place has got into the industry. The first yarn spinners and cloth weavers that came from Flanders to East Anglia set up their looms here.

The place-name first used as an adjective—Worthstede

thread or Worstead thread—gradually became a substantive, and *worsted* is the survival.

Brown's "topographical detective" expedition took us

WORSTEAD CHURCH

to Worstead. The station is about a mile from the village, which is seen at once by its tall tower. Some wretched "restorationist" has put knobs on it in the form of pinnacles

which are entirely out of character for these bluff square towers of Norfolk, but the church and tower is so fine and

A CORNER IN WORSTEAD

so well proportioned that even these excrescences cease to annoy us after a time.

Before we had reached the village a very pretty girl on a bicycle passed us. Brown seemed extraordinarily interested

in her, wondering who she was, where she was going, and the like.

I chaffed him about it after about the fifth speculation, and he muttered something about "getting up the local colour."

Later on, as we reached the village, he began looking round again, and I suggested we might make a few delicate inquiries about the local beauty at the New Inn. Perhaps our detective work would have to take a new turn. Brown was most annoyed.

"Just like your crass ignorance," he expostulated, "or you would know that there is a definite connexion between pretty girls in this part of Norfolk and the establishment of the great weaving industry. My remarks about the 'local colour' are much to the point, and I will give it you chapter and verse. The beautiful girls of Norfolk were part of the bait set to lure on the adventurous Fleming—that and good English meat. Here is part of an exhortation inviting them to come over:

> *But O how happy should they be if they would but come over into England, bringing their mystery with them, which would provide their welcome in all places! Here they should feed on fat beef and mutton, till nothing but their fulness should stint their stomachs. . . . The richest yeomen in England would not disdain* to marry their daughters unto them; and such the English beauties, *that the most envious foreigners could not but commend them.*"

ROUGH SKETCH OF THE SUBJECT-MATTER OF A LARGE PLAQUE IN THE GOLDEN FLEECE INN AT WELLS-NEXT-THE-SEA. IT REPRESENTS JASON LEAVING WELLS WITH THE GOLDEN FLEECE, PRECEDED BY NEPTUNE WITH HIS TRITONS

I felt that I owed Brown an apology. His interest in the charms of the damsels of Worstead was, after all, only an interest in the accuracy of English history.

"You must remember," said Brown, "that before the advent of the weaving industry in England, East Anglia was one of the great wool exporting coasts of England. The Flemish merchants came over from Bruges and the Low Countries, and many of them had built houses in Norwich. To this as well as to the weavers can be traced a certain character of these East Anglian towns.

"The Flemish and Dutch gables are to be found everywhere, and the early use of brick—earlier, I think, in church

building than in any other part of England—seems to denote the architectural influence of the Low Countries."

In connexion with this subject of the excellence of East Anglian wool in the eyes of the Flemings can be cited a remarkable work of art in the Golden Fleece Inn at Wells-next-the-Sea. I have turned up a scribbled memorandum of this. It must not be regarded as anything but a note to show the subject-matter of arrangement of this picture—or rather plaque—upon the wall.

As far as I can make it out, it represents Jason, who has been in search of the golden fleece, sailing in triumph with it from the harbour of Wells preceded by Neptune in his chariot and by attendant Tritons who are attempting to broadcast the news by means of sea-shell horns. It has been considered by experts to be Flemish work, and it is exceedingly interesting as reflecting the opinion of the times as to the popularity of East Anglian wool.

After the industry of yarn spinning and weaving had become firmly established in England the cloth trade was protected by all sorts of enactments. In 1336 the first English Sumptuary Laws were passed :

1. Prohibiting export of raw wool.
2. Forbidding all but the royal family from wearing any foreign cloth.
3. All who could not dispend £100 a year must go without facings of silks and furs.

There is little trace now of the great days of Worstead—the huge church (one left out of several) and some cottages

WINDY WEATHER

which show on the right of the sketch on page 161 and a few other buildings. Even these cottages have been altered, and you can see in the brickwork where the broad lights—

THE EASTERN APPROACH TO WORSTEAD

characteristic of the windows to light a loom—have been replaced by ordinary modern windows.

We made inquiries and raised the local archæologist,

Mr. Stanley Watts, junior, who enlightened us much and showed us underneath a bakehouse a building, below the level of the road, with a groined roof like a crypt. He also introduced us to some records nearly a hundred years old made by a parish clerk who had the habit of bursting into verse on every possible occasion and left volumes of rhymes. I do not say that Shakespeare at his strongest cannot equal these efforts, but they are exceedingly interesting as reflecting the rural mind of the times of which he wrote.

WORSTEAD CHURCH FROM THE EAST

X
THE LOST RIVER

" Old signs do not deceive."

Danish Proverb

THE LOST RIVER

OF all the clues we found at Worstead the most significant was the name Briggate, a hamlet nearly one mile distant. There were also other significant names—Bengate and Withergate, all at about the same distance from Worstead.

"The great thing," said Brown, "in tracking down evidence of the weaving age here, is to try and reconstruct the place as it must have been, and then seeing if any trace upon the map or in actual substance of fact fits into your reconstruction. For instance, if you can recall our Iron

Age explorations in Sussex you will remember that we became quite expert at finding hammer ponds or traces of dykes because we knew exactly where to look for them.

"Now in this case," he continued, "you must imagine street after street of low buildings with looms and hundreds of people working at them, together with storehouses, drying grounds, fulling mills, and a great many accessories and subsidiary trades dependent upon the main industry.

"I cannot ascertain whether most of the looms were in the houses of the people or whether the workers assembled in factories. There is hardly any evidence. It is probable that both practices were general. The allusion to boys being apprenticed to master weavers suggests some sort of workshop larger than that of a household loom.

"The importance of Worstead suggests that it had some sort of defined zone, not for purposes of defence, but for purposes of civic control. Taxes on things going into or going out of a town—as the *octroi* in many Continental places—were levied by the civic authorities in many towns. For instance, one of the evidences of the probability of Sussex having an iron founding industry at a certain date is the fact that it is recorded at that date that there was a tax on every cartload of iron nails entering Lewes. This was a town tax and nothing to do with the national exchequer or the Crown.

"It is probable that Worstead in its great days had some definite exits and entrances by road where toll could be levied, and we must look for *gates*. Bengate and Wither-

NORTH WALSHAM

gate are interesting, but Bridge Gate is the most hopeful. If there is a Bridge Gate there is a port, and here we can look for mills for fulling, a necessary factor in the cloth-making industry."

NORTH WALSHAM AND THE ANT

We make our way to Briggate, and there we find, as Brown had suggested, mills which may be the successors of older ones and a river, small now and only just navigable for wherries, but probably of much greater dimensions when the county was more heavily wooded. This extension of the Ant by means of locks to take traffic up to North Walsham is a lost river indeed. There is very little moving upon it, and its towpath and banks are in a rough and sorry condition. It is known as the North Walsham and Dilham Canal.

Roads in the Middle Ages were notoriously bad and also very unsafe, and merchandise was sent in bulk by water wherever it was possible. It seems inevitable, therefore, that Briggate was the river-quay and harbour of Worstead, and warehouses must have stood along the waterside by the river that connected it with Norwich and Yarmouth, the ports for seaborne commerce.

After some study of Briggate we made a sortie to Eccles. This had nothing to do with the worsted thread, but it lay so near us that we thought we would like to see how much or how little was left of the famous church, which for two or three generations has been in the process of slow destruction by the sea. In a book concerning rambles upon the coast of Norfolk written fifty years ago I came across a description of Eccles Church. At that time the tower was standing, but it was choked up with sand. I was assured by many people that now not one single fragment of Eccles Church is to be seen. I have found, however, eye-witnesses' accounts so misleading that I determined to view the place myself.

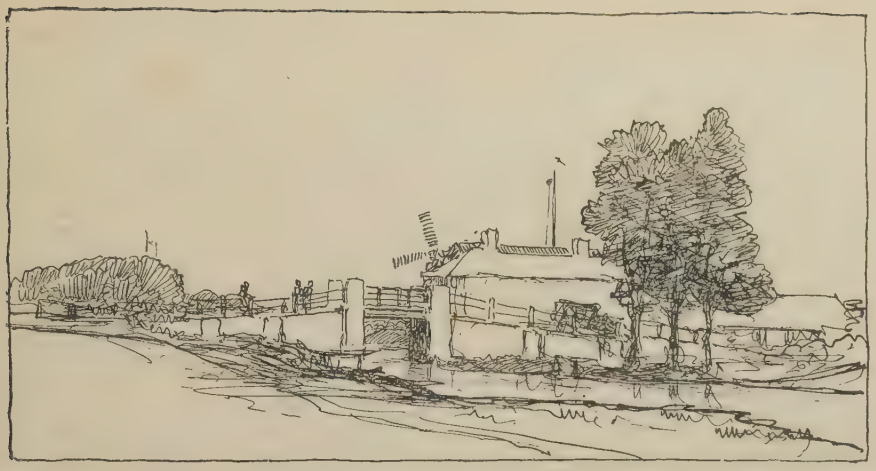
The road ran through Stalham. Here from a bridge we could look down the lost river, and for once there was a wherry upon it, bowling along merrily before a gusty wind. A small mill was pumping away for all it was worth, but the scene was somewhat cheerless.

Soon Happisburgh Church comes into sight, an immense pile, and near it, but not at first so conspicuous, the light-house. Then a mile of road, fringed part of the way with stunted and wind-blown trees, and we are climbing the sand-dunes in search of the ruined church.

There it is, right enough, for all the accounts of its complete disappearance, but it is in three small fragments, like three rocks upon the sands.

The scene is a wild and lonely one. The sun goes down behind Happisburgh Church and the undulating sand-ridge,

THE LAST STONES OF ECCLES



BRIDGE NEAR STALHAM

and we make our way back to Stalham and finally get a lift to North Walsham.

The little sketch on page 183, which looks rather like a scene in Central Africa, is of a place just outside Stalham, where some brick-kilns, curious from the point of view of a man of Kent, rather add than mar the interest of the scene.

North Walsham is known to most people because it was here that Nelson went to school. Brown had other interests in it, and it was not long before I was dragged hither and thither by this topographical sleuth-hound. He darted in and out alleys, strode up and down narrow streets, nodding

and grunting occasionally as he noted certain features of brickwork which seemed to me commonplace enough.

"Look at that," he said excitedly, "and that! The fools said North Walsham was never a weaving town."

Apparently the fools were the unfortunate orthodox archæologists. Brown always referred to them as members of the dry-as-dust school.

"If you will deign to explain," I said, "what you are looking for in this extraordinary manner I might be able to help you."

"I am making notes on the alteration of windows. You will notice here" (we walked twenty yards) "and here and here" (we went down one street and up another) "and here" (we were almost running now) "there have been drastic alterations. In all cases these alterations have taken the form of putting in an ordinary modern sash window and bricking up a space at the side. In some cases you can see a flat arch of brick extending beyond the present window, as if there had been two, side by side. As a matter of fact, that is exactly what *was* there once. The windows that are used for lighting a loom are long and extended like two or three ordinary sash windows in a row. As these no longer have any use, and as the cost of keeping the wood and glass of windows in repair is greater than maintaining brickwork, these old windows have been gradually replaced."

Thus Brown maintained that North Walsham had been connected with the weaving industry, although there is no direct evidence to that effect. But it is on the river system

(*Wymondham*)

" When on my goodly charger borne
Thro' dreaming towns I go,
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow."

TENNYSON, *Sir Galahad*

which connects it with Yarmouth and Norwich by means of the Ant, as is Worstead, and seems unlikely to have been entirely out of the trade.

BRIGGATE NEAR WORSTEAD

There is an interesting old market cross in North Walsham. To me it seems rather Flemish in its design, but that may be only a fancy on my part. I will give it for what it is

worth, and have no evidence for it, but a man told me that he thought this market cross had originally come from Worstead. The cattle market used to be at Worstead, but it was given up and held at North Walsham. There is a tradition that when this was done the market cross of Worstead was transported to North Walsham.

The next small journey on our programme—a programme which might be humorously described as wool-gathering—was a visit to Aylsham. The reason for this was on account of Aylsham being mentioned in old records as a cloth town. Before Norwich possessed any cloth weavers, Aylsham is mentioned, together with Worstead, as providing the cloth for the judges' robes at Norwich.

The entrance to Aylsham from the railway station is a very pleasant one. There are two branches of the stream, and the road, overshadowed by large trees, crosses these, and then, between very Flemish-looking gabled houses, leads into the outskirts of the town. I have shown one aspect of this in the colour sketch in this chapter.

We wandered through Aylsham, by way of the square, out into the grass-land beyond, noticing many interesting features, relics of its greater days. Brown explored more thoroughly than I did, and while he did so I sat down to paint, watched by some children who held the usual colloquy concerning my work. These informal discussions on art generally end in a violent and acrimonious discussion as to the subject of the picture, a circumstance which, according to the older school of criticism, would be highly unflattering

THE MAIN STREET OF WYMONDHAM

KILNS NEAR STALHAM

to the artist, but which to-day, when we realize that it is entirely chocolate-boxy to make the painting suggest in any way the subject in view, does not matter.

The place where I was sketching was a curious zone of grass-land, very long and some one hundred feet in breadth. It was not a road, neither was it large enough to be called a field. I asked the children what it was called, and they told me it was Butt Land. This explained it at once, and it was easy to imagine a scene of holiday when the young men of the town came out to do their artillery practice with bows and arrows.

Lector : Surely artillery is a word that belongs to a later date, after the use of gunpowder?

Pictor : You are quite right, and it is in this sense that it is generally used ; but as late as the reign of James I the

word artillery was still employed to describe bows and arrows, as the authorized version of the Bible testifies :

" And Jonathan gave his artillery unto his lad, and said unto him, Go carry them to the city."

AYLSHAM

AYLSHAM

XI

NELSON'S COUNTRY

" Mystic deep as the world's centre are the roots a man has struck into his native soil ; no tree that grows is rooted so."

CARLYLE

BRANCASTER

NELSON'S COUNTRY

THERE are seven Burnhams on the northern sea-coast of Norfolk, and they all link together and straggle over each other. Only trained experts can tell where one leaves off and the other begins. I have been told tales by inhabitants that there is an eighth Burnham under the sea. It is quite possible that there is an inundated Burnham lying on the ocean's bed, like the Lost Atlantis, for this is a coast of swamped land ; but if so, its propaganda department has been very inactive, and it does not even run to the legend, fostered by all other drowned cities, of the bells of

its churches being heard by fishermen, from time to time, ringing merrily under the sea.

Of these seven Burnhams, there is one known by name by the generality of Englishmen, and that is Burnham Thorpe, because here Nelson was born. There seems to be no doubt about this historical fact, although many stories about Nelson's early life must be taken with a grain of salt. Nelson's father was the Rector of Burnham Thorpe, and the Rectory house where he was born is gone. A few bricks in a stable are pointed out as the only authentic remains of the old house.

Even this tradition, not that of Nelson being born in Burnham Thorpe, but of his being born in the old Rectory, has been challenged, and a local archæologist informed me that there is an oft-told story in the village that he was, as a matter of fact, born in a cab not far from the church, and that the local inn, hard by, was the first house to welcome the infant hero of Trafalgar.

A visit to this inn did not throw much light on the subject, and I became somewhat bewildered between the claims of the pro-cab and the anti-cab theorists, concerning Nelson's advent into the Naval History of England. Mine host of the inn takes a philosophically impartial view, and regards both schools of thought with respect, not wishing to drive either faction away, for strangers like myself entering fresh into the arena of controversy require a great deal of lengthy explanation of the historical strength of one party as against the imaginative and legendary tendency of the other party,

BURNHAM THORPE

and much good Norfolk ale is consumed in the process.

I was beginning at last to grasp the probable facts of the case, and had at least become firmly convinced that Nelson, being neither artist nor poet, was born *somewhere* when a third group upset everything by the astounding statement that it was not Nelson, but Nelson's mother, who was born in a cab. This was, I was told, a story made up from the misreading of a letter still extant, a fragment of which reads that Nelson's mother, on an occasion immediately preceding the birth of Horatio, "was borne hither in the only vehicle which could be obtained." It would seem, therefore, if there is really any credence to be attached to this sentence, and if it is authentic, which I should very much doubt, that Nelson was born at the inn. This thing is an illustration of the difficulty of obtaining evidence of many circumstances which are thought to be well authenticated. Even the tactics employed in the battle of Trafalgar are still a matter of controversy.

THE COAST OF NELSON'S COUNTRY

It cheers me to think that although I was unable to draw as the scene of Nelson's birthplace the old Rectory because it is no more, I have drawn better than I knew in presenting a view of Burnham Thorpe as you look down upon it from the road to the station, for if there is anything in this village legend, I have depicted Nelson's birthplace in fact.

The view is a typically English one—the old church among the trees, the swelling hill behind it, the quarry, the pond and a goodly array of sturdy oaks, trees for the fashioning of wooden walls.

In the church of Burnham Thorpe the lectern is made out of the oak fallen from the *Victory*, and one of the " sights " of the vestry is Nelson's signature in the register of births and marriages, made when he was a boy as witness at a wedding. It appears that little Horatio was the only member of the congregation on the occasion of a wedding solemnized by his father, the rector, and that he had to be entered as a witness. His name is spelt wrongly and altered.

One of the first questions that occurs to the visitor when he roams amidst these rural scenes of the great Admiral's boyhood is to ask himself what was this impressionable youngster's first acquaintance with the sea. Burnham Overy is the nearest beach to Burnham Thorpe. Brancaster, the great Roman seaport station of the Counts of the Saxon Shore, is within five miles. Wells-next-the-Sea is the nearest port of any size in Nelson's time, and then come Blakeney and Cley along that lonely and wind-swept marshy shore of

FRANCASTEL

the North Sea. I was informed by a fisherman, who was very certain of his information, that Nelson sailed from Wells Harbour to join the *Victory*. As there is a well-known picture of his leaving the Sally Port at Portsmouth the assertion seems to be without popular traditional support. Ports that saw Nelson off to Trafalgar are plentiful.

The bluff square tower of St. Mary Overy is striking, as is the slender lantern tower of Blakeney. I have sketched them slightly on page 194 to show their respective styles, so that you can know what to look for from afar.

I walked over from Burnham Thorpe to Brancaster, a distance of about five miles, through Burnham Market, which is a straggling village, once quite an important little town, as its name denotes, through Burnham Deepdale, with its ancient church with characteristic round tower built of flints, by Brancaster Staithe, a fragment of which I have sketched on page 200, until Brancaster itself comes into sight. In vain did I look for the walled Roman camp which I had expected to be like Burgh Castle or Caistor by Norwich.

At first I thought that not a stone of this was visible, a farmer pointing out to me a large turnip field as the recognized site. Afterwards, however, by walking along the marshy shore, a vast "salting" that in Roman times was sea, I came upon fragments of flint and stone wall, as I have depicted on page facing 192, but I had no evidence to connect that definitely with the Roman Camp.

It is a lonely tract of country, and there was not a soul in sight in all that great expanse. A melancholy survival

THE LANTERN TOWER OF BLAKENEY CHURCH

of other days is the hull of some derelict ship, lying upon the grass-land far from water, but evidently driven there by some extra high tide during a gale.

The demand for building material must have been brisker here than at Burgh or Caistor, for it is the builder who sweeps away old ruins. Left to themselves, the walls of any castle or church devoid of roof and in damaged condition would remain standing. I have met numerous people who talk about an old ruin decaying as if in some way stones vanished by themselves by some process of disintegration. What happens really is *that they are taken away* by somebody.

THE TOWER OF ST. MARY OVERY

BLAKENEY

NEAR WEST RUNTON

Now Burgh Castle, near Yarmouth, is, for its age, in magnificent preservation. Where the stone facings of the walls are easily "worked" the dressed stones have been taken away, but higher up, where they are difficult to get at, the walls are intact, so that the round bastions at the corners appear from some points of view like giant fungi, thick stems spread out at the top. For a thorough exploration of this wonderful ruin we must possess ourselves in patience until we are well launched into unknown Suffolk.

At Caistor, near Norwich, much more has been removed, but there are some fine fragments, and the general shape of things is preserved.

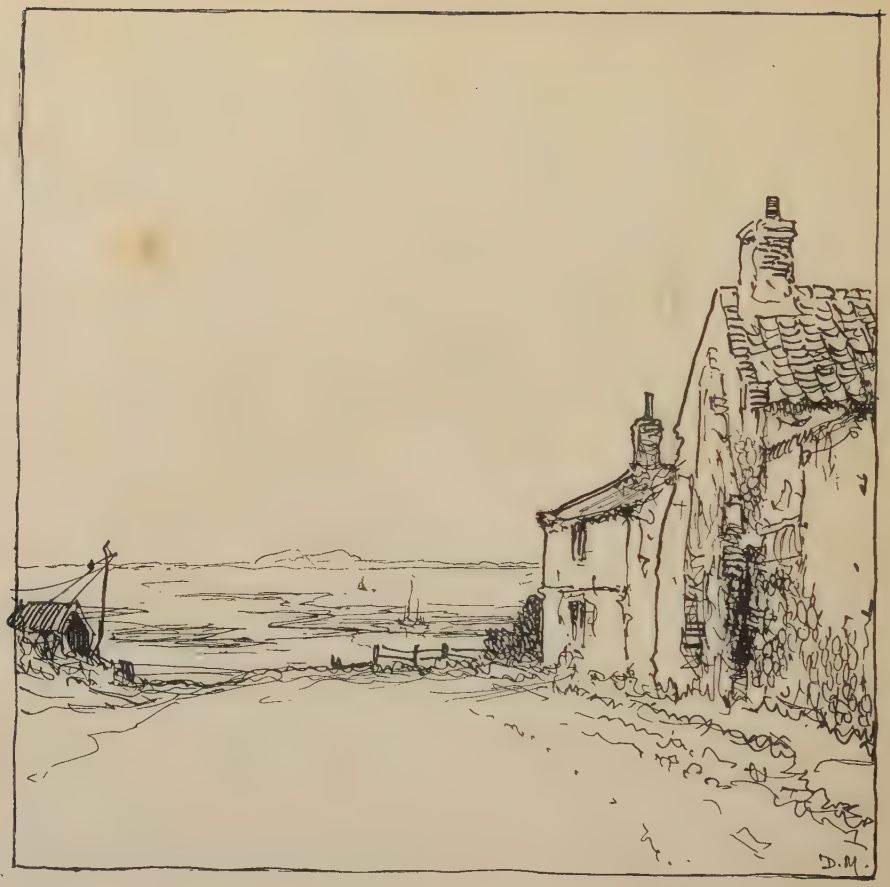
At Brancaster, however, everything has gone. There is no large town near them, as in the case of Burgh and Caistor with Yarmouth and Norwich as "robbers." Thus it seems more remarkable that it can all have vanished. No doubt every farm-house, church, or cottage of any antiquity within miles is indebted to the Romans for their material, but, allowing for that, it still seems strange to me that Brancaster

can have gone entirely and Burgh, situated in the same way, remain nearly intact.

I have seen it stated in various topographical works that the Romans had a road linking up Brancaster with Caister (near Yarmouth). No evidence is given, and on considering the nature of the country in those days it seems very improbable that this was so. The piece of coast now known as Horsey Gap was then an arm of the sea, extending over the area occupied by Horsey Mere and Hickling Broad. Thus a road could not have linked up the coast continuously if one existed at all.

That some connection was maintained between various posts along this coast is probable, but then, as now, the beach and foreshore at low tide would make the best track.

This northern shore of Norfolk is a fascinating bit of country, wild and heathy at first as you go eastward out of Wells, through Stiffkey, where the great industry is collecting mussels, an occupation chiefly followed by women, whose death-rate from rheumatism is high—the men rumoured to be in a large measure exempt by remaining unemployed, though this may be a libel on the part of chatty neighbouring villages. Then comes Blakeney, with its long, straggling street going down to the sandy creek, and Cley with its gaunt windmill and even more out-of-the-world appearance. Beyond this, and still going eastward, are Saltmarsh and West Runton and then Sheringham and Cromer, hardly, however, to be included now in *Unknown Norfolk*. I have scribbled a little sketch of a bit outside West Runton where



BRANCASTER STAITHE

WELLS-NEXT-THE-SEA

a tall kiln standing by the sea makes the place look like somewhere on the shores of Arabia.

Some of this country looks as if it might become part of the sea again at any time. An inhabitant of Saltmarsh told me that he looked out after every gale to see if the low-lying part of Saltmarsh had gone.

To return to Wells-next-the-Sea, which is to my mind a refreshingly original seaside resort. You will find a golden beach with no pierrots and a little seaside town with no pier. A pine wood gives a satisfactory ending to a delightful strip of country. In the late autumn and winter there is some good wild fowl shooting on the marshes.

The visitor will not miss seeing the old plaques in the Golden Fleece Inn. One of these I have shown in a scribbled sketch on page 163, and there is a companion to it. This represents St. Blazius, who is apparently a Bishop, the patron saint of the wool merchants, standing amidst the sheep with a wool-comb in his hand.

When I was there last there was a characteristic old-world craft lying off the quay. She seemed to me to be a Yorkshire *Billy Boy*, which is a legacy from the Dutch and Flemings. I am particularly interested in this development in shipbuilding, for the type of vessel is exceedingly like the *Penguin* on a larger scale. There is a certain flavour of Cook and Cotman and Stanfield about her which fits exactly into the quaintness of an old-world port like Wells.

That Nelson, in the midst of all the subsequent pomp and circumstance of his popular acclamation as a great

naval hero, could never forget this fragment of his dear old Norfolk is witnessed by the fact that when he was made Viscount Nelson he chose to be Viscount Nelson of the Nile and *Burnham Thorpe.*

BURNHAM DEEPDALE

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